FBIS DAILY REPORT

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MILITARY 'ADVISORY' GROUP REPORTEDLY FORMED

PY201637 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES HERALD in English 20 Feb 84 p 7

[Text] (DYN) -- An "advisory commission to reestablish military prestige," reportedly headed by retired Major Generals Luciano Benjamin Menendez and Antonio Domingo Bussi, is working in offices in the third floor of the Army Headquarters, Joaquin Morales Sola, of the mass-circulation daily CLARIN, said in his column yesterday. The two officers have been charged with violations of human rights by several rights groups.

Formation Denied

PY212115 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1923 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (TELAM) -- The hief of the Army Joint Staff has denied reports on the creation of an advisory commission for restoring military prestige with an office set up at the Libertador Building.

A communique released today says that reports published in various social news media reporting this are totally inaccurate.

The communique also says that the instituation is now trying to satisfy all the requests made by judges and by the Missing Persons Commission about cases of missing persons in which military personnel on active duty or in retirement are involved.

It explains that the presence of retired military personnel at the Libertador Building is necessary to apprise them of the requests being made by judges since those requests are being channeled throught the Army Joint Staff.

The communique informs that public that military personnel have been assigned the task of satisfying the judicial requests, as well as those which can be made by the Missing Persons Commission, including the work of coordinating the travels and presentation of military personnel who are affected by those requests and who are in the interior of the country, abroad, or at the disposal of the Armed Forces Supreme Council.

ARMED FORCES COUNCIL REQUESTS GALTIERI'S ARREST

PY211531 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1512 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (NA) -- According to a high-ranking military source, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces has asked the Army General Staff to arrest Leopoldo Galtieri, former president of the nation and former commander in chief of the Army.

The request is tied to Galtieri's responsibilities for the leadership of the Malvinas War. Galtieri has been making statements before the Armed Forces Supreme Council since 0845.

Detained at Campo de Mayo

PY220225 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 0032 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (TELAM) -- Former de facto President General Leopoldo Fortunato Galtieri, retired, is being held at Campo de Mayo on orders of the Armed Forces Supreme Council in connection with his trail for responsibility during the Malvinas war. Galtieri will stay in custody until his situation is resolved It has been officially reported at Campo de Mayo.

FORMER NAVY COMMANDER ANAYA DETAINED OVER MALVINAS

PY222305 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 2158 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Buenos Aires, 22 Feb (TELAM) -- Former Navy Commander Admiral Jorge Isaac Anaya, retired, has been detained by a decision of the Armed Forces Supreme Council, which also ordered that he be transferred to the Navy Mechanical School, though not incomunicado, as reported by Jorge Gonzalez Ramirez, secretary of the Armed Forces Council.

Anaya testified until 1830 [2130 GMT] at the military court, after having already testified in the morning, in the proceedings which are investigating the responsibilities of the Malvinas war.

FORMER NAVY MECHANICS SCHOOL DIRECTOR ARRESTED

PY201342 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1122 GMT 20 Feb 84

[Text] Buenos Aires, 20 Feb (TELAM) -- Police sources have reported that Rear Admiral Ruben Jacinto Chamorro, retired, former director of the Navy Mechanics School, was arrested early this morning.

The former navy officer, who is accused of alleged violations of human rights, held that post from 1976 until 1977. The sources added that Chamorro is being held at Federal Police headquarters.

Case Jurisdiction Changed

PY221516 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1732 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (TELAM) -- Federal Judge Jose Nicasio Dibur today ordered the release of Vice Admiral (retired) Ruben Chamorro in the case resulting from the investigations of the activities of Triple A.

Dibur decided to send Chamorro, under custody, to the Armed Forces Supreme Council so that the proper measures can be taken.

DEFENSE MINISTER COMMENTS ON ARMY-MIR CONTACTS

PY221245 La Paz Cadena Panamericana in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Bolivian Defense Minister Manuel Cardenas Mallo has told the press that leaders of various political parties, such as the Movement of the Revolutionary Left [MIR], have been seeking contact with members of the Bolivian military high command. Answering journalists' questions, the minister explained that MIR leaders Oscar Eid Franco, Aranibar Arancibia, and (Delgadillo) recently sought to meet with Army Commander in Chief Simon Sejas Tordoya.

[Begin Cardenas recording] These and other political leaders have sought to meet with the high command, that is, members of the military high command. I would like to say that General Sejas has the full confidence of the government and the executive branch. We do not feel that these events are important, because many politicians have met with Gen Sejas. The significant and dangerous thing would be if a member of the Armed Forces got involved in partisan political activities.

This is something I want to make very clear and it should be kept in mind. Any commitment undertaken by any officer, irrespective of his rank, does not necessarily imply a commitment of the Armed Forces. Decisionmaking is not a personal affair within the Armed Forces. Decisions are taken jointly by the chiefs of staff and the commanders. This does not mean that Gen Sejas has been (?compromised). Everything related to the events about which the journalists have been continuously asking can be further explained by the MIR leaders. [end recording]

Minister Cardenas went on to say that President Hernan Siles Zuazo will meet again with the high military command at the swearing in ceremony of the secretary of [word indistinct], but that the situation of Gen Sejas Tordoya will not be discussed. He added that General Mario Vargas Salinas is not under house arrest, as has been rumored.

According to the defense minister, the Bolivian Armed Forces are being provoked by political agitators, as was the case in (Chua), where a group of peasants led by (Poma Guarachi) tried to take the weapons of an ensign on Sunday night and caused an incident in which one of the peasants was wounded. The minister also said that Peruvian [as heard] politicians are operating in the area of Lake Titicaca, a situation that is being investigated by the appropriate authorities.

[Begin Cardenas recording] Attempts at taking away weapons or entering military grounds closed to unauthorized persons are a violation of regulations and constitute a provocation. In these cases, the Armed Forces are clearly aware of the need to prevent any efforts at disrupting the status quo. [end recording]

MILITARY COMMANDER SUPPORTS CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE

PY222020 La Paz Radio Illimani Network in Spanish 1700 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] The nation's Armed Forces will faithfully fulfill all current constitutional provisions. This statement was made by the commander in chief of the Armed Forces, who became the official spokesman in a meeting held between the Armed Forces High Command and the president of the republic.

The military commanders and the president held talks for more than an hour during a working breakfast at the Government Palace. The main objective was to brief the president on the activities being conducted within the three branches of the Armed Forces, in addition to receiving instructions from the president in his role as captain general of the Armed Forces.

Commander Alfredo Villaroel Barja reconfirmed previously expressed ideas that the Armed Forces are engaged in their specific functions. He added that evidently the current situation in the country is worrisome.

He explained that the national press has asked questions regarding the political status of some political parties which are provoking the Armed Forces of the nation. Villaroel Barja stated in this regard that the subject has been explained appropriately, and that for this reason he has not referred to the matter.

The commander in chief of the Armed Forces later reported on the president's instructions to solve food shortages within the military sector. He said that the Armed Forces will look for solutions within the framework of self-sufficiency through the implementation of modern technologies in agricultural and livestock projects within the Army, and through the implementation of productive systems which will also allow recruits to finish their military service with an important degree of agricultural knowledge.

In conclusion, he referred to pamphlets that have been circulating within the different military units, stating that they were anonymous pamphlets to which no one pays attention. These acts of provocation have always existed, he stated. He then reaffirmed that the Bolivian democratic process has the support of the nation's Armed Forces, and that this is what the national Constitution states.

MIR LEADERS DENY COUP ASPIRATIONS AGAINST SILES

PY232330 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0008 GMT 23 Feb 84

[Text] La Paz, 22 Feb (EFE) -- The "Movement of the Revolutionary Left" [MIR] today denied being involved in a coup d'etat against the democratic process in Bolivia.

The "MIR" has reacted strongly against the government of President Hernan Siles Zuazo in view of a presumed accusation of being involved in a coup action. MIR leader Jaime Paz Zamora is the constitutional vice president of the nation, but he abandoned the government in 1983 because of disagreements with President Siles Zuazo.

A document signed by Antonio Aranibar and Oscar Eid, top MIR leaders, states that "the government is seeking to involve them in alleged coup actions in a new strategem to distort the irreproachable democratic behavior" of his political organization.

They explained that their leaders held a meeting with the commander in chief of the Army, General Simon Sejas Tordoya, and that "it is part of normal democracy to exchange points of view among those who have political, union, and institutional functions."

Gen Sejas Tordoya has confirmed that he met with the MIR board to assess the political situation, but he denied that coup attempts were discussed at the meeting.

Defense Minister Manuel Cardenas Mallo has stated that "some politicans are trying to encourage military chiefs to a new coup d'etat," but he warned that the Armed Forces are aligned with the democratic process.

The recent meetings that Siles Zuazo has held with top military leaders have fanned speculation in official and opposition sectors about an imminent coup or the resignation of the president. The democratic government has ruled out the president resigning and voiced assurances that he will fulfill his term in office until 1986, according to remarks made by government spokesman Mario Rueda.

According to what has been learned, the top military leadership was able to propose to the president the need for a readjustment in the government structure to guarantee democracy and to face the economic crisis with consensus. Siles Zuazo is currently making consultations with political, union, and business leaders to make up a new government in view of the irrevocable resignation of Industry Minister Oscar Bonifaz.

COB LEADER CONFIRMS CANCELLATION OF STRIKE

PY221357 La Paz Cadena Panamericana in Spanish 1100 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Aldo Flores, a Bolivian Labor Federation [COB] leader, has reported to Cadena Panamericana that the COB has called a national meeting for next Thursday in order to present a comprehensive report to its delegates on the attitudes of the COB Executive Board. Flores said that although the decrees issued by the government are not completely satisfactory, they are very positive. Therefore, we have decided to call off the 48-hour strike, Flores added.

SMUGGLING OF ARMS FROM U.S. UNDER INVESTIGATION

PY180040 Paris AFP in Spanish 2147 GMT 17 Feb 84

[Text] La Paz, 17 Feb (AFP) -- Interior Under Secretary Gustavo Sanchez Salazar has returned from Miami after investigating secret shipments of arms from the United States to Bolivia, according to information released here today.

Sanchez Salazar did not disclose the results of his trip, but it has been reported that the arms smuggling which started a few months ago involved pilots of the state company Lloyd Bolivian Airline (LAB). It was not determined whether the arms were for ultraleftist or ultrarightist groups that are interested in destabilizing President Hernan Siles Zuazo's democratic regime.

Meanwhile, Information Minister Mario Rueda Pena has announced that the government will imprison those who continue blocking the streets, a protest that started this morning against the enormous increase in the cost of living. Speaking after the protest had ended, Rueda Pena said that those who block streets and highways "want to destabilize the democratic process."

CONGRESS PUTS FORMER PRESIDENT ON TRIAL

PY171901 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2316 GMT 16 Feb 84

[Text] La Paz, 16 Feb (EFE) -- Today the Bolivian Congress began a trial on the criminal charges against former President Luis Garcia Meza, who was in power from 1980-81. This is the first of many trials to punish those who are guilty in the "dirty war" waged in this country following the 1980 coup. The legislative branch is considering the charges made by the Revolutionary Movement of the Left (MIR) and the Socialist Party-1, which are accusing Garcia Meza and his principal aides of several crimes.

OFFICIALS ON STEEL NEGOTIATIONS WITH U.S.

PY222135 Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 21 Feb 84 p 13

[Text] Yesterday Carlos Viacava, director of the CACEX [Foreign Trade Department], admitted that at present the United States is not importing Brazilian steel and that "negotiations are difficult and are not running smoothly." Marcos Jose Marques, secretary general of the Industry and Commerce Ministry, said, however, that the Brazilian Government "is going to play it tough" and that it is not certain whether it is worth signing an agreement with the U.S. Government to reduce Brazilian steel exports so that the U.S. Government, in turn, may withdraw the charges of dumping against Brazil.

According to Marques, once the U.S. Government has reviewed its charges of dumping (sale of goods below their production cost) and the subsidy for exports of Brazilian steel by mid-March, it is quite possible that Brazil will export steel to the United States without the cancellation of the lawsuits. He explained that "the charges of dumping became groundless with the cruzeiro maxi-devaluation one year ago and the fact that many of the subsidies no longer exist. Therefore, surcharges should drop automatically."

Marcos Jose Marques, who returned from the United States on Sunday, said that on Thursday the Brazilian delegation "tried to show" the U.S. Trade Department and U.S. Steel (which filed the antidumping lawsuit) that the current competitiveness of Brazilian steel in the U.S. market is due more to its high quality and low price than to subsidies. Marques pointed out that the delegation showed the U.S. negotiators documents proving that "Brazil has faithfully complied with international commitments to withdraw subsidies, especially the gradual withdrawal of export incentives through tax refunds that should be totally eliminated by April 1985." As for subsidized interest rates, they reassured the U.S. representatives that "they almost no longer exist."

The U.S. Government has been asked for some time to inform the U.S. steel companies about the Brazilian arguments and decide whether it is worth continuing negotiations. Marques said that the U.S. and Brazilian Governments should arrange the date for a new round of negotiations next week.

REPORTAGE ON POLISH CARDINAL GLEMP'S VISIT

Schedule Outlined

PY201225 Sao Paulo Radio Bandeirantes Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 20 Feb 84

[Text] Polish Cardinal Jozef Glemp is already in Rio de Janeiro, where he said that the main objective of his visit is to learn more about Brazil since little is known about it in Poland. Today he is scheduled to tour religious and historic sites, and tomorrow he will go to Brasilia. On Wednesday, he will go to Sao Paulo, while on Thursday he will visit Porto Alegre and on Friday he will go to Parana, where he will stay until Monday. He will also visit Rio Grande do Sul.

Arrives in Brasilia

PY211824 Paris AFP in Spanish 1625 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Brasilia, 21 Feb (AFP) -- Polish Primate Cardinal Jozef Glemp today arrived in Brasilia, the second stop in his pastoral tour through Brazil. Msgr Glemp was met in Brasilia by Apostolic Nuncio Msgr Carlo Furno, by the president of the Brazilian Episcopal Conference, Msgr Ivo Lorsheider, and Polish Ambassador Janusz Mickiewicz. Upon his arrival, the cardinal made it clear that his visit had no political connotations whatsoever.

Today Msgr Glemp will meet with Brazilian Foreign Minister Ramiro Saraiva Guerreiro and Brazilian President Joao Figueiredo. Tonight he will be feted at a dinner held in his honor by the Polish ambassador.

Msgr Glemp, who is planning to travel to the south of the country to meet the members of the large Polish-Brazilian community (100,000 persons), stated that his tour was strictly pastoral. Currently, some 200 Polish priests (out of a total of 6,000 foreign priests) are working in Brazil.

Asked about his coming trip to Argentina, Msgr Glemp made a joke: "I have been told that Argentine wines are better than Brazilian wines. I would like to compare them myself."

Meets Figueiredo

PY212350 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] At 1600 today President Joao Figueiredo received Warsaw Archbishop Cardinal Jozef Glemp. At the end of the meeting Glemp said that the Brazilian president had wished him good luck in his tour through Brazil.

Views on Solidarity, Politics

PY221537 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0006 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Brasilia, 21 Feb (EFE) — Today Polish Primate Cardinal Jozef Glemp said in this capital that Solidarity lost its meaning when it went underground, thus tacitly recognizing that the Catholic Church no longer officially backs Solidarity. Glemp said that before Solidarity was proscribed in October 1982, eclesiastical officials supported it because "it defended principles which agreed with the social doctrines of the church."

"The Solidarity now in existence has moved a great deal away from its principles," said the Polish primate after a meeting with Brazilian President General Joao Figueiredo. Primate Glemp said that he opposes the participation of the church in politics and that his opinion about Solidarity was not "a political assessment" of the issue but "a verification of facts." The cardinal said: "Officially, Solidarity no longer exists. The church is only trying to help Solidarity's imprisoned members, regretting their situation. Solidarity only exists underground."

Upon his arrival in Brasilia this morning, Glemp admitted that the Polish Catholic Church had to intervene "to calm political agitation" in the Warsaw suburb of Ursus where "groups of agitators infiltrated Solidarity with destructive aims, thus creating disorder." Glemp justified the transfer of Father Mieczyslaw Nowak to a parish in another part of the country. This opposition priest, Solidarity's "outstanding activist," is wanted back by nine persons who are on a hunger strike. Glemp added: "I must say that this hunger strike and all the agitation in the Ursus church only involve the activities of a few dozen people who want to be politically noted in Poland."

During the 3 days he has been in Brazil on "a private and pastoral visit" -- as he has said repeatedly -- Primate Glemp tried to emphasize that the church and its members should stay out of political activities. He said in Brasilia that "with the teaching of the gospel the church carries out a social task, but the church cannot get involved in any political activity because it would be taking sides."

Observers believe that this is Glemp's special slogan during his stay in Brazil, a country where the Catholic Church is under the control of progressive groups, where the bishops are actively participating in political and social activities, and where there are two priests -- two French missionaries -- sentenced for political crimes. The Polish primate said that he is "unfamiliar" with the political activities of the Brazilian Catholic Church, denying having any specific instruction on this matter from the Vatican for the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops (CNBB) whose president, Ivo Lorscheider, met with him.

Joint Declaration Signed

PY230110 Porto Alegre Radio Guaiba in Portuguese 2150 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Brasilia -- No regime, of the right or of the left, will be able to successfully obstruct the church's actions. This was stated in the joint declaration of the Polish and Brazilian churches signed today by Polish Primate Cardinal Jozef Glemp and Dom Ivo Lorscheider, president of the CNBB [National Confederation of Brazilian Bishops]. According to the document, the strength of the church in Brazil and in Poland, in its relationship with the state, lies in its integrity. The church position is not opportunist, it represents a force against authoritarianism.

In Dom Ivo's opinion, the most important paragraph of the declaration is that which clearly states that the church will never be silenced in Brazil, in Poland, or in any other part of the world.

BRIEFS

NAVY CHIEF OF STAFF -- Admiral Alfredo Karan will assume today the post of navy chief of staff in a ceremony to be presided over by Navy Minister Admiral Maximiano da Fonseca at the Nobility Hall of the Navy Ministry in Brasilia. [Text] [Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 20 Jan 84 p 6 PY]

ANGRA-1 RESUMES OPERATIONS -- The Angra-1 nuclear power plant resumed operations on 11 February after a 15-day breakdown due to a defective part in one of the axles of the turbines. Yesterday Angra-1 reached 50 percent of its installed capacity, putting out 313 megawatts for southeastern powerlines. [Excerpt] [Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 14 Feb 84 p 17 PY]

U.S. POULTRY IMPORTS SUSPENDED -- Brazil has suspended the importation of poultry and special eggs (used for making vaccines) from the United States because of the "poultry influenza" disease in that country which led the U.S. health administration to slaughter more than 10 million chickens last week. [Excerpt] [Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 17 Feb 84 p 10 PY]

MATTHEI HAS RESERVATIONS ON ANTITERRORIST LAW

PY221823 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpts] Chilean Air Force Commander Fernando Matthei said here today that he believes there is need for an antiterrorist law, but expressed some reservations about it by stating that he agrees with much of the criticism that has been made in this regard. The military junta member talked with journalists accredited to the government following a meeting with President Pinochet.

Regarding the slander campaign again being directed against our country, General Matthei said that it is perfectly obvious that such a campaign does exist. The general, who at first declined to answer some questions, was quite clear in this regard.

The Air Force commander noted that he believes there is a need for an antiterrorist law in Chile since terrorism is a new phenomenon in our country and in neighboring countries despite the fact that they have democratically elected governments. However, he said that there are some aspects of the law with which he disagrees. Regarding reports that Chile is arming itself, specifically with (?Pershing) missiles, he said: This is nonsense.

Matthei also said that he will not visit the Antarctic since the runway at the base has deteriorated.

OFFICIAL WARNS THOSE PROMOTING PUBLIC DISORDERS

PY221820 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Government Secretary General Alfonso Marquez de la Plata reasserted today that any action for disrupting public order will be punished. The government official made this statement after meeting with President Pinochet. He also reported that a cabinet meeting will be held this afternoon presided over by the interior minister.

SCHWEITZER TO HEAD COUNCIL OF STATE 3 MORE YEARS

PY221818 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1630 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Miguel Schweitzer has been appointed to a new 3-year term as president of the Council of State. This is established by Decree No 78 issued by the Justice Ministry. This decree is published today in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE and is in force as of 3 February 1984.

NATIONAL SECTORS SEE SIGNS OF ECONOMIC RECOVERY

PY211713 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Asked about Finance Minister Carlos Caceres' recent statement that Chile has overcome the recession, leaders of several national sectors have said it is true that there have been signs of economic reactivation in the past 5 or 6 months.

Fernando Aguero, vice president of the Industrial Development Association, [SOFOFA] noted that there have been signs of economic recovery since October. However, he noted that the situation differs according to individual sectors. In the industrial sector, for example, the textile and rubber industries have experienced higher growth, while the situation is stagnant in the metalworks industry.

He added that the $780 million-loan obtained from the international banking sector by the finance minister will help prevent a loss of national reserves.

German Molina Morel, president of the construction chamber, noted that there has been an increase in the construction of public works and housing in the last 5 or 6 months, but noted that this is due to greater activity in the public sector since the private sector is still confronting economic problems.

Rafael Cumsille, president of the Retail Business Confederation, said that he is planning to tour the northern region of the country to obtain first-hand information on the business situation there adding that that sector is still encountering problems and that he hopes that the announcements made by the finance minister will help solve its economic problems.

Antonio (del Curto), president of the exporters association, said that the $780 million credit obtained from the international banking sector is very positive. He said that this is an optimistic sign because it means that the international banking sector has confidence in Chile. Depending on how the Central Bank distributes them, he said that the new resources will particularly aid the production sector. He said that unemployment has declined as evident in the increase in hiring manual labor by the farm exports sector. He added that the fact that the international banking sector still has confidence in Chile is a positive sign since it means that we will have sufficient resources to assure our development.

FINANCE MINISTER EXPLAINS ECONOMIC PROGRAM

PY221326 Santiago Radio Mineria in Spanish 1000 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] According to Finance Minister Carlos Caceres, who reported on his meetings in Washington and New York with representatives of the U.S. Government, the international banking sector and international organizations, IMF Executive Director Jacques de Larosiere has officially informed the Chilean Government that the IMF has approved the Chilean economic program for 1984, which estimates that the government deficit will total 4.6 percent. [as heard] The finance minister also noted that the government is planning to invest over 70 percent of its budget in the Housing and Public Works Ministries.

The objective of the economic plan is to reduce unemployment and establish the proper bases to achieve solid development for the medium-term. Finance Minister Caceres added that the government deficit will primarily be financed through foreign resources so that the majority of domestic resources may be used by the private sector.

He estimated that there will be a 6-percent increase in the availability of financial credits, which will primarily be used to finance support programs for the private sector, which was already begun last year. The finance minister also said that the government plans to continue enforcing the present interest rate policy within the framework of a free market economy, but that preestablished interests rates will be enforced for short-term deposits over a given period. He also said that the IMF executive director officially informed him of IMF support for the economic program proposed by the Chilean Government within the framework of the standby agreement.

PARTIES REACT TO PINOCHET'S REMARKS ON ELECTIONS

PY212125 Santiago EL MERCURIO in Spanish 15 Feb 84 p C 3

[Text] New political organizations yesterday expressed their satisfaction with the statements of President Augusto Pinochet, who discarded the possibility of having a congress designated or elected by means of a plebiscite. Pinochet stated that "when we have a congress, it will be elected by the people."

Fernando Maturna, chairman of the political commission of the National Union and a former congressman, stated that the National Union received the president's statements with "satisfaction," and added that it "puts an end to speculations that have led nowhere and once and for all confirm the democratic path to a transition and the necessary crystallization through a congress elected by the people."

He added that previous remarks by President Pinochet led us "to conclude that the congressional elections could be held ahead of schedule," perhaps in 1986 or earlier, "depending on the development of the political laws being issued and the formation of electoral lists by means of modern methods of registration and control."

The Liberal Movement also stated that "we have always felt, being the democrats we are, that only the people have the sovereignty to elect their representatives." It adds that "regardless of the fact that the president said that when we have a congress it will be elected by the people, he continues delaying a quick return to democracy because he has not set periods or a specific deadline for an advance toward democracy."

Hugo Fernandez, leader of the "Democratic Socialist Workshops," stated that according to this organization, "an elected congress is appropriate from a democratic standpoint. Moreover, we feel that what the president said can mean political immobilism by the government, a very serious event, to the extent that the mechanisms for the existence of this oversight branch as provided for by the 1980 Constitution are not established."

Sergio Recabarren, member of the political commission of the National Democratic Party [PADENA], stated, however, that the president's words show "regrettable disrespect," and added that in his judgment, "that opinion will not prevail." He explained that "the time will come when prudence will prevail in the political parties and an intermediate solution will be sought, such as having a congress elected by means of a plebiscite." He added that PADENA will continue promoting that alternative "with new doctrinal supports and support from personalities," because thus far no other possible alternative has been found, "since demanding the president's resignation is simply nonsense."

AD TO JOIN CNT PEACEFUL PROTEST 27 MARCH

PY172100 Santiago Radio Cooperativa in Spanish 1615 GMT 17 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Mario Sharpe, president of the Democratic Alliance, disclosed that the opposition had agreed to hold a peaceful demonstration 27 March.

[Begin Sharpe recording] Yesterday, the Democratic Alliance agreed to call a protest on the 27th, the same day the National Workers Command will hold its protest. Like the one held last year this protest will be truly peaceful, and will consist of the banging of pots and pans, keeping children out of school, and refraining from doing any shopping. [end recording]

Mario Sharpe was asked what the purpose of this first protest of 1984 is.

[Begin Sharpe recording] Its purpose is the same as that of last year: make the government understand that most Chileans desire a quick return to democratic government. [end recording]

It was pointed out to Sharpe that despite the fact that there were seven acts of protest last year, the government has not changed its attitude.

[Begin Sharpe recording] Unfortunately, the government is mistaken because social tension is increasing daily, and if a solution is not sought for the country's problems, we cannot predict what will happen. We want the government to see the need to reach a consensus and democracy through peaceful means. [end recording]

COMMUNIST PARTY PLANS POPULAR REBELLION

PY211601 Santiago TERCERA DE LA HORA in Spanish 10 Feb 84 p 4

[Text] "To promote a policy of popular rebellion, including the intensive infiltration of the Armed Forces," was one of the main agreements reached by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Chile [PCCh] during its recent "secret" meeting at 444 Serrano Street, headquarters of the Construction Workers Confederation.

According to information, the PCCh also decided to infiltrate the Democratic Alliance by all possible means. It also established that "the party's main concern this year will be the labor unions, to be run by the Communists, which will have to be strengthened to fight."

Regarding the planned national strike, the PCCh defined it as "an insurrectional strike of the masses," indicating that "the strike will be the beginning of the rebellion of the Chilean labor class." The PCCh also decided to support any type of street actions and to have its paramilitary groups unleash as much violence as possible in order to weaken the government. In the suburbs, the PCCh will try to organize its "supporters" by channeling their aspirations through demonstrations against the regime. It will also encourage the massive takeover of empty lots to create a general upheaval.

Another agreement reached was to mobilize the masses on weekends to create agitation through urban and rural fires. According to the sources of the information, this has already taken place with the forest fires in the fifth region.

The PCCh's objective is "to cause uncertainty and fear and helplessness among the people." The PCCh says: "A new stage has begun, a stage characterized by a greater mass struggle openly defying current legal measures in addition to new methods of struggle inside and outside the law seeking rebellion by every possible means. Violent struggle must not become simple, bold actions, but those leading to a historic struggle of proletarian revolution in Chile. The actions must be a hard blow to the people in order to frighten them. Therefore, these actions must become more radical, more violent, and bolder."

Another point, which was discussed separately, was the "Mayo Plan" sponsored by the National Union Coordinating Board. It was officially announced as a plan "to mobilize the workers." The plan of the coordinating board, signed by its president, Manuel Bustos, says that "various sectors of workers, students, and people in the suburbs have shown interest in holding public demonstrations. Due to this interest, the National Union Coordinating Board has planned a number of demonstrations."

FOREIGN MINISTER URGES REVITALIZATION OF OAS

PA211830 Bogota Cadena Radial Super in Spanish 0000 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Bogota -- Colombia has proposed the admission of Cuba, Canada, Guyana, and Belize, among other nations, to the Organization of American States [OAS] in order to revitalize that international institution. Foreign Minister Rodrigo Lloreda Caicedo said in a speech delivered in Ottawa during a banquet hosted by the Canadian prime minister that he believes that dialogue among nations basically similar in their international policies is just as important as among nations whose relations are strained.

Lloreda Caicedo said that is would be absurd to seek opinions of countries that are not members of the OAS today, such as Cuba, Guyana, Belize, and Canada, regarding a revision of the system. It is essential that those nations that had left the OAS return, and others, such as Canada, which are American but have never belonged to the organization, be eventually admitted.

Referring to Canada, which he is officially visiting for the first time, Lloreda Caicedo noted that despite its connections with Europe and its growing interest in the East, it is primarily an American nation closely related to the United States, the Caribbean, and Latin America.

STATE WORKERS CONTINUE OCCUPYING LABOR MINISTRY

PA222019 Bogota Emisoras CARACOL Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Bogota -- The Labor Ministry installations are still occupied by 35 members of the National Federation of Workers at the Service of the State, FENALTRASE, protesting the government's salary policy. FENALTRASE President Aida Abella de Osorio, who heads the ministry's takeover, said they will remain in the minister's office until the government orders a raise greater than 18.5 percent or establishes compensation for the current salary's lack of purchasing power.

Labor Minister Guillermo Alberto Gonzalez Mosquera emphatically warned that no dialogue will be held regarding the workers' demands as long as his office remains occupied. Mosquera is reportedly meeting with President Belisario Betancur to seek solutions to the state workers' demands. The minister added that should the leaders not leave his office, he will not attend a planned meeting with them at 1400 to inform them of the results of his meeting with President Betancur.

OIL PRODUCTION TO INCREASE 12.7 PERCENT IN 1984

PA222145 Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 17 Feb 84 pp 1, 3

[By Raul Rodriguez]

[Excerpts] Colombian oil production increased 7.3 percent in 1983, and in 1984 it will increase 12.7 percent, according to Rodolfo Segovia Salas, president of ECOPETROL [Colombian Petroleum Enterprise]. He said that the country is trying to prevent dependence on foreign oil supplies, but that it is not yet possible to forecast when it will become self-sufficient.

At a news conference at ECOPETROL yesterday, Segovia Salas released the results of the company's 1983 operations, which were positive and established new bases for increased benefits in the short and medium terms.

At the end of 1983, the accumulated investments of foreign companies in oil exploration amounted to $1,923,600,000, whereas their income came to $438.4 million, thereby saving the country more than $1.4 billion in foreign exchange.

Domestic oil production averaged 152,000 barrels a day in 1983, compared to 141,000 barrels a day in 1982, and a projected 173,000 barrels this year. Domestic oil production in 1983 came from: ECOPETROL, 69,300 barrels a day; association contracts, 20,200 barrels a day; and concessions, 62,500 barrels a day.

ECOPETROL's general balance of payments had a deficit of $703.3 million in 1982 and $552.8 million in 1983. Last year's export income was $438.7 million. Imports cost $615.3 million and other expenses amounted to $376.2 million. The latter was paid to private companies operating in Colombia for oil and gas supplied to ECOPETROL plus the cost of freight. ECOPETROL had a net profit of 700 million pesos in 1983 following a loss of 662.7 million pesos in 1982. Last year ECOPETROL invested 23.5 billion pesos and plans to invest 38,461,900,000 pesos in 1984. Its foreign debt at the end of last year was $699.6 million, 0.1 percent less than in 1982.

ARMY TROOPS, HELICOPTERS CHASE GUERRILLA COLUMN

PA222025 Bogota Emisoras CARACOL Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Florencia -- Two hours ago, (Juan Ambu) battalion troops began an intense pursuit of an M-19 [19 April Movement] guerrilla column that had ambushed a military patrol yesterday and killed a second lieutenant, a corporal, three privates, and a civilian guide. The operation consists of more than 300 soldiers supported by several armed Army helicopters that took off from Florencia and Leiva at 0530 this morning. The pursuit is taking place in the eastern mountainous region south of Florencia. The southern front guerrilla column is led by a guerrilla known as "Boy."

CIVIL DISTURBANCES IN ANTIOQUIA DEPARTMENT

PA221645 Bogota Emisoras CARACOL Network in Spanish 1215 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Medellin -- A civic strike called by residents of Fredonia municipality in Antioquia Department's eastern and southeastern sectors began to lose strength early today. Three Democratic Front [as heard] political leaders were murdered here last Sunday in separate actions hours before the protest drive started.

Last night, violent stonings and disruptions occurred in Rionegro, which were finally contained by authorities. Along the Medellin-Bogota freeway near Marinilla, a vehicle was burned last night and demonstrators stoned a car occupied by Santa Rosa de Ojos Bishop Msgr Joaquin Garcia Ordonez, who was returning from Bogota accompanied by several priests, one of whom was hit by a rock.

Transportation in these areas of Antioquia Department was partially (?restored) today, and stores opened in Fredonia and other localities. This civic strike will be extended until midnight Wednesday.

In addition, a policeman and a civilian were killed by terrorists who attacked a government vehicle with rifle fire and grenades. The vehicle was carrying several people who had been detained following last night's disturbances in Medellin. The police reported that three people riding a motorcycle attacked the vehicle, which was also carrying several policemen. The policeman killed, the second in a single day in the (Aburra) Valley, was identified as Manuel Antonio Tachira Gutierrez, 24. The civilian killed was German Dario Gonzalez. Fifteen other policemen were wounded and have been hospitalized.

RESUMPTION OF POLITICAL DIALOGUE DISCUSSED

PY221850 Montevideo Radio El Espectador Network in Spanish 1600 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpt] It has been reported that Professor (Juan Fidel Devoto) has held a meeting with the interior minister and the chairman of the COMASPO [Armed Forces Political Commission] to discuss the resumption of the political dialogue. According to what Radio El Espectador learned this afternoon, at the meeting they discussed issues of concern to the political parties and the Armed Forces.

According to sources, the meeting between (Fidel Devoto), General Julio Cesar Rapela, and (General Hever Pampillon) had satisfactory results. They added that as a result of the preliminary talks with the Colorado Party secretary general and the National Party board director, it is estimated that the first official joint meeting will be held during the first half of March. However, for the time being it is not known if there will be a meeting with the Civic Union Party board president, but this possibility has not been rejected.

'SECRET' MILITARY-POLITICAL TALKS REPORTED

PY230133 Montevideo Radio Carve in Spanish 0000 GMT 23 Feb 84

[Text] Contacts between politicians and the Armed Forces have begun. As Radio Carve has predicted, top leaders of the Blanco and Colorado Parties have held separate meetings with high-ranking general officers of the Armed Forces. The two parties have agreed to keep the first contacts secret to avoid interference that could abort the negotiations. No fundamental issues were discussed during these contacts, only the methods of the future, formal talks.

NEW LEFTIST, LABOR PARTIES SEEK RECOGNITION

PY220220 Montevideo Radio Carve in Spanish 0000 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Two new political parties, one of them leftist and the other one linked with the industrial sector, expect to participate in Uruguayan politcs, looking toward the presidential elections promised by the military regime for November 1984. According to well-informed sources, the two parties have already begun gathering the signatures that will allow them to register at the Electoral Court as the People's Party and Labor Party, respectively.

The People's Party may participate in the November elections if the government does not lift the ban on the parties that made up the so-called Broad Front in the 1971 elections. The Labor Party has even designated the members of its ticket, although no names were given. If the two parties are recognized, there will be at least six parties contending in the next elections. [Passage indistinct].

Another party, which was recently created and which is led by Labor Minister Colonel Nestor Bolentini, retired, will also participate in the elections. Bolentini says that his party, the Patriotic Union for the Salvation of Democracy (UPSD), is not progovernment.

The political spectrum could be enlarged even further if a new party is created, following a suggestion made by President Alvarez long ago, by minority factions of the traditional parties, the Blanco and the Colorado Parties.

LUGO GIL SAYS RELATIONS WITH USSR AT HIGH LEVEL

FL222335 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2250 GMT 19 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Mexico City, 19 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- Bilateral relations between Mexico and the Soviet Union continue at a high level, despite the change in leadership in that nation, Logo Gil, leader of the Chamber of Deputies, asserted today. Interviewed at the capital's airport upon his return from Moscow, where he attended the funeral services for Soviet leader Yuriy Andropov as a member of the Mexican delegation, Lugo Gil termed as very important Mexico's presence in that country, which considers Mexico a sister nation. He stated that he and Ambassador Emeritus Antonio Carrillo Flores held talks with Vladimir Kasimirov, deputy foreign minister [as received], and Aleksey Shitikov, leader of the Politburo [as received].

SOVIET DEPUTY MINISTER ARRIVES FOR TRADE TALKS

FL230153 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1732 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- The Soviet Union will increase trade with poor nations for the purpose of contributing to their economic and social development, USSR Deputy Foreign Trade Minister Viktor Ivanov has stressed. He said his country opposes the closing of markets and favors the establishment of international trade based on equality. He made these comments on arriving in this capital heading a Soviet cooperation delegation.

He noted that a demonstration of the support given by his country to developing countries is that out of the 160 billion dollars [of his country's foreign trade], 30 percent is with countries of lesser development.

Ivanov criticized the economic games of capitalist nations, because they are unjust and do not contribute to the socioeconomic development of the countries that are in need. Referring to the third meeting of the Mexico-USSR Intergovernmental Joint Committee on Cooperation over which he presides, the official referred to the importance of the Mexican Government's position with respect to foreign policy, and added that its presence in the international scene represents social and political peace.

POLISH PARLIAMENT MARSHAL ARRIVES FOR VISIT

FL222348 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2120 GMT 20 Feb 84

[Excerpts] Mexico City, 20 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- When the Solidarity Union was dissolved, Lech Walesa was left out of the political scene, Stanislaw Gucwa, marshal of the Polish parliament, stated today on arrival in this capital.

The leader of the Polish parliament will remain in this capital for 6 days. While here he will hold talks with Manuel Bartlett and Hector Hernandez Cervantes, secretaries of the Interior and Commerce and Industrial Development Ministries, respectively, as well as with Ramon Aguirre Velazquez, chief of the Department of the Federal District.

EXPORTERS MAKE NEW TRADE PROPOSAL TO U.S.

FL222359 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 1631 GMT 20 Feb 84

[Text] Mexico City, 20 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- The community of Mexican exporters has proposed a formula to U.S. commercial attaches for balancing trade between the two nations. The formula stipulates that for every peso imported by Mexico, two must be exported to the United States.

The proposal aroused the interest of the U.S. commercial attache, who said he would study it in depth and that, in any case, it would be submitted to U.S. businessmen for consideration, Antonio Planos, vice president of the National Association of Mexican Importers and Exporters (ANIERM), stated.

The two-for-one program is quite flexible and, to a large degree, solves the country's foreign currency problem, which has led to a drastic reduction in purchases from the United States, he added. The implementation of such a program is also of interest to U.S. exporters who, because of the collapse of their sales to Mexico, have not been able to find other markets for their products.

During a meeting between the ANIERM and Calvin Berlin, the commercial attache of the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, and other advisers, it was reported that there are some 3,000 or 4,000 traditional exporters who cannot sell to us and, despite their contacts, cannot find buyers for national products.

Antonio Planos insisted that in order to carry out the two-for-one program, simultaneously with that of production circles -- structured by ANIERM for small- and medium-size enterprises -- credibility and confidence must be created, as well as flexible, operational, and simple mechanisms.

OIL DELIVERIES TO NICARAGUA RESUMED IN JANUARY

FL222312 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2210 GMT 19 Feb 84

[Text] Mexico City, 19 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- The Foreign Secretariat today announced that the oil problem with Nicaragua was fully solved during the 3d week of January.

Nicaragua had declared a moratorium on the payment of $10 million for oil supplied under the San Jose Accord, signed by Mexico and Venezuela on 3 August 1980, which provides for the sale of crude oil to Central America and the Caribbean with soft credits.

Spokesmen of the Mexican Foreign Secretariat indicated that the Nicaraguan Government had recognized the existence of the debt and had promised to pay it in the next few months, which led to the immediate resumption of oil deliveries.

Nicaraguan Ambassador to Mexico Mauricio Cuadra said there had been a small commercial incident, referring to the suspension of oil deliveries, but asserted it had been resolved in past days.

Meanwhile, Foreign Secretary Bernardo Sepulveda recently stated that as far as he knew, Venezuela will continue to participate in the San Jose Accord, inasmuch as there are no reports to the contrary.

EL SALVADOR

REPORTAGE ON GOVERNMENT, REBEL MILITARY ACTIVITY

Army Reports Clashes

PA221556 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 21 Feb 84 p 2

[Text] San Miguel -- Fighting yesterday continued until noon in San Luis de la Reina and Sen Gerardo, according to military reports. The clashes began at dawn Sunday, and the Army command sent troops in via helicopter to cut off the terrorists' flight. Colonel Domingo Monterrosa, commander of the 3d Military Zone at San Miguel, is in charge of the military operations in that sector of the country.

Elsewhere, reports indicate that aside from the 29 [as heard] accidental deaths caused by the helicopters' collision, the troops reported no other casualties in the action, while the terrorists had already suffered 14 casualties. Meanwhile, San Miguel, La Union, Morazan, and Usulutan are again without power. The authorities have not yet found the exact location of the sabotaged installations. Counting today's blackout, this is the third time this year the eastern sector has been left without electricity due to sabotage actions.

Guerrilla Leaders Captured

PA221945 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1730 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] Guerrilla commanders were captured today at dawn at the San Sebastian Island after heavy fighting between Army forces and FMLN factions. The information, supplied by military sources of the 6th Brigade stationed in the capital of Usulutan, revealed that one of the captured FMLN commanders goes by the alias of (Ray Bony), 35, an electronics engineer. That was all the available information.

Rebels Derail Train

PA222155 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] A train carrying two tractors that are the property of the [word indistinct] was derailed and burned today near (Puente Negro). A train pulled by locomotive No 852 was carrying the two tractors, which have been used for the past 2 months to repair (Puente El Burro). The train was derailed and set afire today at 0930, near (Puente Negro), at the km 170 point of the rail line, which is in the jurisdiction of Tecoluca canton. According to official information, the crew included machinist Pio Gomez, engineer Mario Mixco, and two other crewmembers. they were traveling aboard locomotive No 852 without a guard, carrying the tractors that are being used to repair (Puente El Burro), which is located between the stations of Canas and (Tahuacan), in Tecoluca jurisdiction. Rebel groups that had taken up positions on both sides of the railway set off a powerful bomb, which had been placed under the rail, as the train was passing. The explosion derailed the locomotive and the cars carrying the two tractors. The crew was unhurt but they were ordered away by the extremists. Moments later, the rebels set the locomotive and the tractors afire, thus inflicting serious losses on [words indistinct]. Troops from the 5th Infantry Brigade were deployed to the area a few minutes ago to seek out the rebels. There is no further information at this time.

ENERGY RESTORED THROUGHOUT EASTERN SECTOR

PA221827 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 21 Feb 84 p 2

[Excerpts] Energy has been completely restored to the eastern sector, which for the past 24 hours had been blacked out after subversives using dynamite sabotaged several electrical towers near Mercedes Umana, Usulutan Department. There was no information given on the material damage caused by the sabotage of the electric installations.

FMLN HONORS 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF SANDINO'S DEATH

PA220447 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Communique issued in El Salvador by the FMLN General Command commemorating the 50th anniversary of the death of Nicaraguan General Augusto Cesar Sandino; dated 21 February]

[Excerpts] The FMLN General Command, in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the death of Augusto Cesar Sandino, the general of free men, sends fraternal greetings to the FSLN National Directorate, its members, and particularly to the heroic Nicaraguan people. From these liberated territories, we have watched with admiration the enthusiasm, sacrifice, abnegation, and heroism with which Sandino's people have faced the difficult and complex situations imposed on them by the historic task of consolidating and developing the revolutionary victory achieved on 19 July 1979.

Fifty years after Sandino's murder, his struggle has achieved its fullest expression in the consolidation of the Sandinist People's Revolution. Here in El Salvador, the march continues victoriously toward the revolutionary victory that Sandino and Farabundo dreamed about together in Las Segovias, more than 50 years ago.

Today, the anti-imperialist struggle is being waged throughout the continent and Sandino's example rises up, as clear as ever, as an inspiration for the Lain American peoples' strong will and decision to fight the imperialist Yankees, who are now in the most aggressive phase in their history.

On this historic date, as the greatest homage that we may pay to Sandino and to his people's heroism, we reaffirm our pledge to continue his struggle, to pursue his ideals, and to liberate this portion of Central America by expelling the very last Yankee military officer from El Salvador.

Farabundo and Sandino, one blood and one destiny! Free homeland or death! Revolution or death, we will win!

[Signed] General Command of the FMLN: Commander Shafick Jorge Handal, Commander Roberto Roca, Commander Joaquin Villalobos, Commander Leonel Gonzalez, and Commander Ferman Cienfuegos

GUATEMALA

DEMOCRATIC COORDINATING BOARD GROUPS IDENTIFIED

PA222149 Guatemala City DIARIO EL GRAFICO in Spanish 21 Feb 84 p 8

[Text] What groups comprise the Democratic Coordinating Board? The board includes committees from the following groups:

Guatemalan Christian Democracy, DCG, the Union of the National Center, UCN; the Humanist Movement for Democratic Integration, MHID; the 20 October Movement [Movimiento 20 de Octubre], M-20 Oct; the National Renovating Party, PNR; the Social Christian Party, PSC; the Democratic Civil Front [Frente Civico Democratico], FCD; the New Force, FN; the Democratic Alliance, AD; the Third Justicialist Democratic Position; the United Revolutionary Front, FUR; and the Democratic Front for National Cooperation [Frente Democratico de Cooperacion Nacional].

The Revolutionary Party, PR, and the Democratic Revolutonary Unity [United Revolucionaria Democratica], URD, may join the Coordinating Board in the future.

HONDURAS

PRISONER EXCHANGE REPORTEDLY MEETS DELAYS

PA222024 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1145 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] A Honduran Foreign Secretariat official, Ramon Hernandez Alcerro, yesterday reported that the exchange of Nicaraguan and Honduran prisoners has been delayed in the past few days. Alcerro told Radio America that 60 Hondurans remain detained in Nicaragua while 12 Nicaraguans remain in Honduran prisons. According to Alcerro's information, the Nicaraguan Government advocates an exchange of 12 Nicaraguans for an equal number of Honduras. The Honduran Foreign Secretariat rejects the Nicaraguan proposal because it means that 48 Hondurans would remain in Nicaragua.

The Nicaraguan Government's stance destroys the hopes of several Honduran families to see their relatives free. According to the Honduran Foreign Secretariat, no exchange would take place if Nicaraguan authorities do not agree to release the 60 Honduran prisoners in exchange for the 12 Nicaraguans.

INCIDENT ARISES OVER NICARAGUAN SAFE-CONDUCT

PA221819 Tegucigalpa Television Hondurena in Spanish 0130 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Relations between Honduras and Nicaragua could deteriorate even more after last Saturday's incident at the Toncontin International Airport. At a news conference this morning the [Nicaraguan] charge d'affaires, Javier Avilez, accused the Honduran police of having made death threats against Nicaraguan Ambassador Edwin Zablah.

[Begin Avilez recording] What happened was that medical student Carlos Augusto Rey Prendes [words indistinct] had joined a reserve battalion medical brigade. After our Foreign Ministry in Managua verified his claim that he was a member of the reserve, had been kidnapped by counterrevolutionaries in that sector, was a Nicaraguan citizen, was a medical student, and was a member of a reserve battalion's medical brigade, the embassy obtained a safe-conduct for him.

On Saturday the ambassador and other officials accompanied Carlos Augusto Rey Prendes to the airport so that he could leave for Managua. He was also accompanied by an aunt named Rosa Argentina. As you are well aware, he was practically snatched from the hands of the ambassador, his diplomatic immunity disregarded, by five DIN [Department of National Investigations] agents.

At the time the ambassador was concerned about the manner in which he was detained and beaten. The lady was also beaten. The ambassador's life was threatened when a DIN agent took out a firearm and threatened him. [end recording]

Our foreign secretary's reaction was immediate. Edgardo Paz Barnica said:

[Begin Paz Barnica recording] The Nicaraguan (?ambassador) spoke to me at approximately 1845 on Saturday to say that *[words indistinct] at the Toncontin Airport of Nicaraguan* citizens who had been taken to the airport to fly them to Nicaragua had been arrested by DIN agents. I promised to investigate. [Words indistinct] were in the country illegally and were analyzing the situation to resolve it according to the law, as is done in Honduras, where a state of law exists.

The Nicaraguan ambassador was proceeding to take a person out of this country whom he had harbored in the Nicaraguan Embassy by using a safe-conduct issued by him, the Nicaraguan ambassador, without notifying our Foreign Ministry. I consider this an abuse by the Nicaraguan ambassador. [end recording]

Paz Barnica added that Ambassador Zablah is a liar.

[Begin Paz Barnica recording] I know nothing about that. The Nicaraguan ambassador can tell as many lies as he wants to. [end recording]

NICARAGUA

RUIZ DISCUSSES U.S. POLICY WITH GDR'S KIESLER

LD221432 East Berlin ADN International Service in German 0846 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Managua, 22 Feb (ADN) -- The continuing arms drive and policy of confrontation by the most aggressive and reactionary circles of U.S. imperialism, and particularly the siting of U.S. first-strike weapons in West Europe, have gravely aggravated the international situation.

This was the shared view expressed by Henry Ruiz, member of the FSLN National Directorate and Nicaraguan minister of planning, and Bruno Kiesler, SED [Socialist Unity Party of Germany] Central Committee member and secretary of the GDR International Friendship League, during a friendly discussion in Managua Tuesday.

The U.S. policy of aggression in Central America, the Middle East, and other regions of the world is increasingly jeopardizing world peace. It is therefore important to prevent mankind's slipping into a nuclear inferno by ensuring that all forces with a will for peace and a readiness for understanding work together.

Henry Ruiz reported on the heroic efforts of the Nicaraguan people and on the FSLN's domestic and foreign policy measures to defend and consolidate the Sandinist people's revolution against the machinations of U.S. imperialism and the counterrevolution that it is fanning. Nicaragua is prepared to continue in the future to make every effort for a peaceful settlement of the conflicts in Central America.

Bruno Kiesler, who is heading the GDR delegation at the ceremonies to mark the 50th anniversary of the murder of Augusto Cesar Sandino, affirmed the close solidarity of the SED and of the GDR people with the Sandinist revolution.

ARCE CASTANO SENDS GREETINGS TO VIETNAM

BK191034 Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 16 Feb 84

[Message from Bernardo Arce Castano, chairman of the Political Committee of the Sandinist National Liberation Front, FSLN, National Directorate, to Le Duan, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, CPV, on the 54th anniversary of the founding of the CPV]

[Text] The founding of the CPV was an important event enabling the Vietnamese people to launch a strategy of revolutionary struggle to oppose the oppressive colonialist regime and -- later on -- imperialist aggression and to successfully build a society free of exploiters. On this occasion, our people once again recall the great exploits of President Ho Chi Minh, the father of the anti-imperialist revolution, the man who knew how to give expression to the love of freedom deeply engraved in the hearts of millions of Vietnamese and who led them throughout the process of heroic struggle.

The Vietnamese people and their heroic vanguard have overcome untold difficulties and obstacles to win total independence and build their own destiny. Alth ough there still is great danger of imperialist aggression, we are firmly convinced that you will once against surmount all difficulties and obstacles.

NUNEZ ADDRESSES STATE COUNCIL ON ELECTIONS

PA221632 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0040 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Speech by Commander of the Revolution Carlos Nunez Tellez, president of the Nicaraguan State Council and member of the FSLN's National Directorate, during a session of the Nicaraguan State Council in Managua to honor Augusto Cesar Sandino on the 50th anniversary of his death -- live]

[Excerpts] Brothers of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction and the FSLN's National Directorate; companeros of the State Council's board of directors; companeros of the Supreme Court of Justice; special guests; cabinet members; leaders of the political parties and organizations represented before the State Council; members of the diplomatic corps; companeros representatives; companeros and companeras:

With his stance General Sandino began a deep transformation of our history. What had up to that moment been the last expression of our 100-year-long civil war became a war of liberation aimed at expelling the foreign invader from our national territory. The seed was sown, and from then on, throughout the long struggle to defend our homeland's sovereignty despite the efforts of those who were to follow in the footsteps of the Marines -- Moncada, Somoza, and their cliques -- the seed was to remain alive. This seed would flower with the foundation of the FSLN; it would become action, resistance, combat, and war, until it would bring about the painful yet beautiful birth of victory -- the beginning of the process we are experiencing -- the Sandinist people's revolution.

Today, 20 February 1984, one day before the 50th anniversary of Sandino's murder -- the man whose efforts gave our nationality real meaning -- Nicaragua is facing an extremely serious and complex situation. We are facing a situation that demands of all Nicaraguans a degree of patriotism like that demanded by the general of free men of his followers.

This implies a radical change of attitude toward the way to resolve the conficts and disagreements of our society. We must assume a different outlook on the electoral process we have already begun; a positive attitude in the face of the elections that will be announced tomorrow when the call to elections is made by the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction. We must accept that this is a new concept of an election, completely different from the type of election that has prevailed throughout our history; a new concept of freedom, honesty, and fairness; a process concerned with the level of participation of all Nicaraguans, because as we participate we contribute to the institutionalization and security needed by Nicaragua and its revolution. This is why the State Council has worked and is working on drafting, discussing, and approving laws that will establish the legal framework of this electoral process so that it will be a legal and political example for Latin American countries and the world.

A political parties law was enacted. It is an exemplary opening that guarantees the option of attaining power through the election of parties. It is important to point out that this law was finally approved with a structure and regulating standards that are substantially different from those of the original draft. It is much broader, more open, and democratic. These changes were the result of hearings and discussions by the commissions and debates in the council plenum.

Regulations in the law were also discussed and approved which, due to their importance, were drafted and approved by the State Council itself, and not by a corresponding administrative decision. In the week just ended we approved the reforms to the Fundamental Statute, which are indispensable to convene the elections.

Elections by direct, free, and secret vote will be held to elect an executive, both [as heard] elected in national balloting. At the same time a national assembly will be elected with 90 representatives and their respective alternates, also by direct vote in 10 regional elections. The assembly's job will be to draft the country's constitution and to assume legislative functions.

These reforms also give the Supreme Electoral Council the character of a branch of government, thereby following a general Latin American practice of guaranteeing its independence from other branches of government.

Statutory norms were also approved to guarantee the juridical stability of the country from the time it was decided to hold the elections until the inauguration of the elected authorities. The decision to hold elections for president, vice president, and a national assembly with the power to legislate and to draft the constitution on two election tickets with their corresponding lists -- one for the executive authorities and the other for the representatives to the assembly -- was made after lengthy debates.

Together with the proposal that was approved, another was submitted which, had it been approved, would have called for holding two successive elections. The first would have been for the election of a constituent assembly that would, in turn, have elected a provisional executive. The second election would have been held after the approval of the constitution to elect the authorities provided for in the new constitution, according to a system provided by the constitution itself. Three basic reasons prevailed in the decision to hold a single election.

First, it was considered that, at a time when our country is facing a covert military aggression which, after Grenada, no one can consider a figment of our imagination, the country needs an executive branch with the democratic backing of direct elections, with the capacity to make speedy decisions for the defense of our homeland.

Second, serious consideration was given to the difficult economic situation in the country, which also requires an executive branch which can act quickly and effectively and an assembly that can draft the necessary legislation to handle the economic situation and also work on the constitution.

Third, it is believed that the country is not in a position to assume the expense of two successive elections. Organizing an electoral process from scratch is very difficult and expensive.

The electoral law has not been approved yet. It is still a proposal, which was drafted by an electoral commission that began work in October 1983 with discussions and hearings with the different political parties. As a result of this work, the proposal will undergo important changes.

Even before the beginning of the electoral process, on the first day of this month, the revolutionary government began to implement a political opening that will be expanded with the election campaign and will culminate with the elections. This manifests the political will and desire of the revolution to guarantee the freedom of political expression and the dissemination of ideas. These have been restricted only when the military and economic defense of our people has required it, without denying the importance of the electoral process. All these are facts, not just words.

We have the political will and capacity to carry out a just, free, and honest electoral process. We are prepared to provide every facility to the international organizations that we will invite and, naturally, to the correspondents of the international press who wish to be present to verify our reality and inform the world about the elections.

The policy of the revolution is truth. We want it to be known and disseminated. This solemn session of the Council of State, dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the father of the popular anti-imperialist revolution, general of free men Augusto Cesar Sandino, is an appropriate occasion to emphasize our desire for independence, national sovereignty, and democratic self-determination. It is an appropriate occasion to emphasize the importance and seriousness that we attach to the electoral process and to reaffirm our political will to advance. We will never tire of saying that the elections will be just, free, and honest for the first time in Nicaragua.

(?Afterwards) we will be able to honestly affirm our pride in being Nicaraguan citizens, and the figure of Sandino will continue to blanket all of the national territory, in the streets, parks, cities, and mountains, reminding every Nicaraguan citizen of the importance of dignity. Sandino is part of history; he is part of each of us; he lives in us; he lives in every heart that beats for his cause, and his thought enlightens the advance of the peoples, the struggle, and the patriotism to hold high the banner of national dignity against the power.

That is why we say with all the strength of his example 50 years after his death, Sandino lives. Thank you. [applause]

OFFICIAL OF MEXICO'S PRI CITED ON ELECTIONS

PA222013 Managua Radio Sandino Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Adolfo Lugo Verduzco, president of the Mexican Insitutional Revolutionary Party, PRI, has said that he considers yesterday's announcement by Revolutionary Commander Daniel Ortega Saavedra, coordinator of the Government Junta, to be very important. The PRI president, who participated yesterday in the main ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the murder of General Sandino, said that the announcement to hold the elections is important due to the progress made by the institutionalization and the democratic opening of the Nicaraguan revolution.

Lugo Verduzco said that he was impressed by yesterday's large crowd at the Plaza of the Revolution, especially by his observations of the participation of the people, who are the principal players of the revolution. Adolfo Lugo Verduzco considers the revolutionary government's decision to hold elections in November 1984 an advance in the institutionalization and the democratic opening of the Nicaraguan revolution.

[Begin recording] [Lugo] It is important because it is an advance toward the institutionalization and democratic opening of the Nicaraguan revolution; it is very important.

[Unidentified reporter] What is your opinion of the people here in the plaza?

[Lugo] They are very active, which is what matters. The people are the principal players of the Nicaraguan revolution. [end recording]

OPPOSITION 'LET DOWN' BY ELECTION TIMETABLE

PA221248 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0049 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Managua, 21 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- Leaders of four Nicaraguan opposition parties this afternoon said that "Nicaragua's democratic forces feel let down by the announcement made today by the Sandinist government," because the plan does not satisfy the opposition's basic points. Miriam Arguello, vice president of the Democratic Conservative Party; Luis Rivas Leiva, secretary general of the Social Democratic Party; Agustin Jarquin, president of the Social Christian Party; and Ignacio Miranda of the Constitutionalist Liberal Movement, said that the FSLN must offer "democratic guarantees to find a political solution to the country's problems."

Miriam Arguello said that setting the dates for the elections and the inauguration of the president and the National Assembly "is not going to solve Nicaragua's problems." Arguello said that the issues presented by the opposition parties on 28 December are still unresolved, and it is up to the FSLN to resolve them.

Meanwhile, Luis Rivas Leiva said that the government must lift the state of emergency and must end press censorship. He also said that the functions of the Sandinist Party should not overlap those of the government, and that the 22 radio programs removed by the government should be reinstated, so that the democratic parties can express their ideas and conduct an open political campaign.

Rivas Leiva said that the Sandinist Defense Committees (CDS) "restrict and curtail people's freedoms and prevent opposition parties from exercising their political rights." Rivas Leiva pointed out that according to the Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board, 16-year-olds should not be allowed to vote because they are "adolescents" and their decisions "are motivated by romantic ideals." He said that if there were democratic freedoms in Nicaragua, the advancing of the election timetable would not affect the process of institutionalizing the revolution.

Meanwhile, Agustin Jarquin, president of the Social Democratic Party, said that the dissident parties do not know why the Sandinist government advanced the elections, "although we in the opposition know that in recent months the Socialist International has urged the FSLN to advance the election date." Jarquin said that it is also possible that the holding of the U.S. elections might have influenced the Sandinists. "However, we do not know exactly," he said.

Ignacio Miranda of the Constitutionalist Liberal Movement said that the dissident parties hope that the Sandinist government will rectify its errors and repeal the laws that prevent the establishment of democracy in Nicaragua.

PARTY LEADERS RESPOND TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS

PA180411 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 0100 GMT 17 Feb 84

["Direct Line" phone-in program with Enrique Sotelo Borgen, coordinator of the Democratic Conservative Party; Domingo Sanchez Salgado, member of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party; and others -- live]

[Excerpts] [Unidentified Moderator] We would like to begin the program by talking about a current subject: the State Council debates on the amendments to the Fundamental Statute. The first speaker will be Dr Sotelo Borgen, followed by Domingo Sanchez.

[Sotelo Borgen] It seems that these debates have produced a flavor and warmth we had not experienced at the State Council. Our party, through our representative Felix Espinoza Briones, has said that the best solution would have been the creation of a constituent assembly and later, through the constituent assembly, election of the president and vice president of the republic as established by the Fundamental Statute and the government program. Unfortunately, something different was already approved, but our party maintains this viewpoint.

The amendments were approved, and I do believe that this could bring about complications in the country's political situation and in the development of the electoral aspect and process in Nicaragua.

[Sanchez Salgado] The State Council debates at this moment are very different from the debates of the former parliament. In the past only symbols passed, but today real political and ideological debates are carried out. Last night we finalized the amendments to the Fundamental Statute. This means that in 2 days of hard ideological battles the democratization of the revolutionary process has been imposed, because we have opened the way to walk toward the objectives that we, the people who are struggling -- as Dr Sotelo Borgen said -- for the democratization and liberation of the country, have outlined.

[Alan Teffel] Compadre Sotelo: You are here representing the Democratic Conservative Party, and your presence here tells me that your party is involved in the political game of the Nica [Nicaraguan] pluralism. What is your divided party planning? Will you go to the elections? I understand that you are represented at the Parties National Assembly and at the State Council, but that you are killing each other.

My dear friend Chaguitillo [Domingo Sanchez Salgado], here on "Direct Line" I will ask you a question that I have wanted to ask for a long time. Your party is a member of the FPR [Patriotic Front of the Revolution], however, your stand is different from that of the UPP [no expansion given] and the PLI [Independent Liberal Party]. It is said that you are negotiating for the position of vice president with the FSLN and that, based on these negotiations, there will be more than one vice presidential position, in other words, three vice presidencies, including the Popular Social Christian Party. What is behind all this?

[Sotelo Borgen] First of all I would like to clarify that I am not here as an official representative of the Democratic Conservative Party. You have said that the party is divided. It is not really divided. There is a division within the leadership of the party, but not among the members. There are some differences that I believe will be solved. The roots of the differences involve mostly legal aspects. We believe that with some good will among the leaders of the party -- I have made several proposals to the other leaders; some of these have been well received, others have not -- we can overcome the situation. Whether we will go to the elections will be decided by the party after certain problems are solved. One of these problems was expressed in a manifest we published requesting three pre-electoral conditions. One of these conditions is an amnesty for our political prisoners. We have also asked for an end to press censorship, that, within the law, we be allowed to publish whatever we wish and that all newscasts be reopened. That all newscasts be allowed so that the voice of all the political leaders can be heard throughout the country. We need to have the newscasts that we had in the past aired again. The newspapers don't reach every place in the country, but the voice does reach all those areas, and we need this for a political campaign to spread our ideological propaganda and all our programs that can be heard over the radio. However, the manifesto was censored. Its publication was not allowed. However, we continue to believe in the political opening.

[Sanchez Salgado] I am here on the invitation of Radio Sandino as a representative of the Nicaraguan Socialist Party. Regarding Alan Teffel's question that we are talking with the FSLN to arrange for a vice presidency, I emphatically wish to state that the talks are not to arrange a vice presidency, but to consolidate the revolutionary alliance and to wage a better struggle against the rightist parties if they are not frightened by the elections.

My friend Enrique Sotelo Borgen of the Democratic Conservative Party has said that many political prisoners are being tried by the People's Courts. I believe that the fact that they are being tried means that they are no longer political prisoners but are another kind of prisoners. They were caught in the act, so to speak, some more obviously than others. He says that they are struggling for the freedom of all the newscasts; we are all interested in improving freedom of expression. Of course, due to the situation in Nicaragua caused by attacks -- not only from those up in arms, quote, but also from imperialism -- there has to be some restriction.

Regarding the opening, what opening? The channel we have opened is wide enough for all Nicaraguans to sail toward the consolidation of the revolutionary process that is transforming our Nicaraguan society.

[Moderator] I would like to expand a bit on the problem of the conservatives.

[Sanchez Salgado] Yes, I believe that in this particular political campaign the conservatives seem to be very intimidated. They are allowing themselves to be led by reactionary and recalcitrant elements, and this leads us to call them reactionaries.

After observing this struggle for some time -- I was with Pedro Joaquin [Chamorro], Cordoba Rivas, and other conservatives for some time -- I believe that the conservatives are currently experiencing the same situation experienced by a parrot I had when I was young.

I had bought some corn and put in the backyard. A bunch of birds came to eat it. I had a parrot. When I woke up the next morning I picked up my shotgun, fired, and killed my parrot because she was with the bunch of birds that were stealing the corn. That is what is happening to the conservatives; they joined the reactionary capitalists and have therefore lost the democratic ideals that Pedro Joaquin Chamorro and Rafael Cordoba Rivas had instilled in many conservatives.

[Julio Armas] Dr Sotelo Borgen, please tell us what your personal stand would be if the coordinating board were to withdraw from the electoral process? Would you accept a Mosquito [Sancudo -- not further identified] candidate?

[Sotelo Borgen] My friend Julio Armas is asking me about the coordinating board abstaining. I have no knowledge of it declaring an abstention. I believe that should we be faced by such a situation we cannot say that we won't go without first knowing any existing conditions. Furthermore, I believe we should ask for guarantees, for freedom, for all that is necessary; if we don't get these things then others will be to blame for our lack of participation. However, if we do get these guarantees and if an alternative exists -- and many are skeptical about this -- then the eyes of the Latin American world and even the Western and socialist worlds will be on Nicaragua and its electoral process. Therefore, we can't say that we won't participate in the electoral process. We don't know what the political situation in Nicaragua will be, so we can't definitely say no, but there is a chance that we will say no. These are the same alternatives that the coordinating board has viewed. We are not members of the coordinating board and we are not members of COSEP [Higher Council of Private Enterprise] -- as one caller said -- we are not businessmen. The Conservative Party is basically a middle class party. In the past and even today there have been differences between the middle class and the upper class of the party, but the middle class prevails. This middle class exists in the urban and rural areas, through the small and medium businessman, that is where our strength lies. Given the opportunity we will demonstrate our strength.

[Moderator] We shall now pass the microphone to Francisco Sevilla, a reporter from Madrid, Spain.

[Francisco Sevilla] I wish to ask Mr Sotelo Borgen two questions. The first is very brief, for elaboration can sometimes lead to mistakes. Mr Sotelo Borgen, you have said that your party wants the freedom to use the press. Do you mean by this the use of all newspapers, or of LA PRENSA?

My second question is this: You have cited some European countries as a comparison. I believe that it is a very serious error to compare Nicaragua with the industrial countries of Europe. I don't think that such a mistake should be made, because the two situations are very different. Therefore, I ask myself, do Mr Sotelo Borgen and his party want to install a regime in Nicaragua similar to those in Europe, which have capitalist economies that are based on the workers' obedience, and which have never provided justice for the poor, favoring the upper bourgeoisie instead? Is it your party's platform and intention to restore capitalism and to submit to the interests of the great capitalist powers -- in this case, the United States?

[Sotelo Borgen] We favor political pluralism; we favor a mixed economy; we favor private business. These are points that are included in our platform. However, there is something that is very important. How do we get into office? What can we do while in government? One of the problems that is faced by any party or government is the development of a program. A party or government must include a series of factors in its development of a program. There was a famous president in South America who said that he had reached office with the best of intentions, but was only able to do 10 percent of what he wanted to do.

As for the capitalist issue, we have been talking about this for a long time. As I have already said, there is a very large middle class in Nicaragua that is, in fact, the driving force of this country. The problem is that this middle class has no concept of class.

[Francisco Sevilla] My first question to you was this: When you say that you want freedom to use the press, does this mean you want to use all newspapers or only LA PRENSA?

[Sotelo Borgen] We want to use all of the media. We want freedom without censorship. We don't want our manifests, our calls, or our programs censored. As I said before, we published a manifesto in LA PRENSA requesting pre-electoral measures. We were not talking about elections. However, this manifesto was censored. Yet the State Council had issued a decree -- and I believe the decree is still in force -- declaring that all issues dealing with the elections are not to be censored. This is what I was talking about.

[Moderator] Domingo [Sanchez Salgado] wishes to clarify something said by Dr Sotelo Borgen.

[Sanchez Salgado] Dr Sotelo Borgen has firmly stated, with that firmness that characterizes the petit bourgeoisie [laughter] that the driving force in Nicaragua is the middle class. I repeat, this is a petit bourgeois concept, because the driving force, the driving force of history, is the working class, the class that produces material goods. The middle class only uses the material goods produced by the working class and cannot therefore be the driving force. This is simply logical.

[Sotelo Borgen] Well, we share -- it was probably a slip of the tongue. [sentence as heard] But we can't deny that the middle class in this country includes professionals, the small industrialists and the small businessmen, and that it is strong, probably as strong as the working class, particularly in rural areas.

[Moderator] We will now pass our microphone to [name indistinct] Obaldia, a reporter for Radio Corporacion.

[Obaldia] Dr Sotelo Borgen, I have the following question for you. Does the Conservative Party in Nicaragua have young members? Is there a vigorous conservative youth movement in this country?

[Sotelo Borgen] Yes, there is. We have a strong and combative youth movement. Their president and secretary are currently in prison. Our conservative youth are quite active in many departments. Of course, it is true that we have many old men and many peasants in the party, and had you attended the conservative meeting in Santo Tomas you would also have seen many black heads, for we also have many Indians in our party.

[Moderator] Reporter Gustavo Montalvan has a question.

[Montalvan] Let's begin with our dear friend Domingo, Chaguitillo, a great defender of the peasants, because he was their secretary general in the past. He was also one of the founders of that union. I think you should look into the charge made by Sotelo Borgen, who has said that peasants who are in prison are having a rough time. You are a defender of the peasants. That is where your history and struggle began.

The Nicaraguan Socialist Party must already have its electoral platform ready and it probably has a list of prospective candidates for the constituent assembly. On behalf of your party, would you please outline some of the points included in this electoral platform and give us the names of some of the candidates you will present in the upcoming elections. I know that we will have an election and that your party will participate. The same is requested of the coordinator of the Democratic Conservative Party. Thank you.

[Sanchez Salgado] As for our political platform, we don't really have one for this electoral period. Of course, we do have an immediate and mid-term action program, which will be discussed at the central committee meeting we will hold on 26 February. We will then decide which of the points included in our immediate program will be emphasized in seeking the support of the working class.

As for prospective candidates, we are not concerned about this, because we would then be falling into the race for power. If we run in the elections, it will be to consolidate the revolutionary process, because these elections will be completely different from any that have ever been experienced in this country.

[Question indistinct]

[Sanchez Salgado] I repeat, it will not be until 26 February that we will decide whether we will go with the 90 candidates for a constituent assembly, proclaim presidential and vice presidential candidates, or what. We are continuing to declare that the best way to participate in this political struggle is through a revolutionary bloc.

[Moderator] Dr Sotelo Borgen will now speak on the same subject.

[Sotelo Borgen] Well, we only have a program of principles based on our party's fundamental concepts. In fact, since the electoral process is just opening opportunities, we still don't know whether we will run alone or within an alliance. We don't know whether we will create a bloc with other parties. These possibilities have yet to be discussed. Therefore, this work would have to begin once it is decided how we will participate.

[Moderator] Dr Sotelo Borgen, we are going to impose on you for a few minutes more -- although we know that you are rushed -- for you to answer questions for Mexico City UNOMASUNO correspondent Jose Salduvar, Radio Noticias correspondent Alejandro Mayorga, and Madrid EL PAIS correspondent Miguel Angel Nieto.

[Salduvar] Dr Sotelo Borgen, what is your opinion on Dr Cordova Rivas' comment that he is the ideal opposition candidate for the upcoming elections? Also, how does your party feel about allowing 16-year-olds the vote?

[Sotelo Borgen] Regarding Dr Cordova Rivas, he has said that if he runs it would as the candidate of the Democratic Coordinating Board if they offer him the candidacy. The Democratic Coordinating Board has not offered him the candidacy, but they have not rejected his comment. You ask wether he can be an opposition candidate. If your are thinking of the oppositon as a unity of parties, well, that union has not yet occured. As I said before, the Democratic Conservative Party is facing some differences among its leaders; therefore, I don't know who they will suggest as a candidate.

Regarding my feelings about 16-year-olds voting, this needs some discussion. Dr (Calvo Arrieta) [not further identified] has already said that for this to happen the civil code would have to be amended, and this is true. We...[changes thought] and because of this I will speak about this very important subject. Many people believe that all Nicaraguan youths are Sandinists, and because of this they oppose the right of 16-year-olds to vote. There's much truth in this. The subject would have to be discussed broadly because certain laws have deeply affected the Nicaraguan youth, and this has had great repercussions among families. A family has great influence over a 16-year-old youth. I am not going to speak of which law, as you all know the law that I am talking about, which is causing great unrest in the heart of the Nicaraguan family. Those young people will not vote easily for the official sectors. Therefore, I believe that this matter would have to be studied from the viewpoint of advisability, political advisability.

[Moderator] Domingo Sanchez Salgado.

[Sanchez Salgado] I also wish to express my opinion about the youth being allowed to vote. From the very beginning, when this matter was being discussed by the Electoral Commission, I have been for this. I believe the youth must be allowed to participate. I differ from those who say that because the youth are picking coffee, building barricades, and so forth, they should vote. No, they should vote because they have the intellectual capacity and intelligence to determine who they will vote for and why they will vote.

[Moderator] The last question will be asked by Alejandro Mayorga, reporter for "The Thought" [El Pensamiento] newscast.

[Mayorga] My question is addressed to Dr Sotelo Borgen. Dr Sotelo Borgen, for some time we have been hearing talk about unity in Nicaragua. Some parties have already taken the first steps to seek this unity. What is your party doing to achieve this unity, and to what is the division due? It is said that the amendments in your charter take your party more to the right, and back into the 18th century.

[Sotelo Borgen] I did not want to expand on this subject, but now that you have brought it up I will try to give you a broad explanation. We began to reorganize the Democratic Conservative Party without fulfilling one of the basic requirements included in our party's charter -- the creation of an organization called a national electoral commission. Without this organization we could not call for a reorganization of the party. But we ignored this requirement. (Sergio Torres Obregario) [not further identified], after making several requests that the charter be respected, and after getting no answer, presented an appeal before the Supreme Court of Justice requesting that the party's charter be respected. It was not as rumored that this had something to do with Sandinist laws. The appeal was for the charter to be respected, and the Supreme Court of Justice, after examining the appeal...[changes thought] which by the way was very well drafted, and this surprised us because we did not expect something like this; we thought this could be handled in another manner. [sentence as heard] Once the matter was before the Supreme Court of Justice, and with the enactment of the Political Parties Law, the Supreme Court of Justice ruled according to the law. It ordered a suspension until the problem was solved. Thus, the division was born between those who disobeyed the Supreme Court of Justice ruling and chose the illegal way, and those who obeyed our legal framework, our charter. We also have the Political Parties Law and other laws of the country, but basically we obey our charter and the Politcial Parties Law, and we know that if we overlook these two documents the party will become illegal.

SEGOVIA MOUNTAINS REPORTED CLEARED OF CONTRAS

PA222003 Managua Radio Sandino Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] From the mountains of Segovia Department the people in arms greeted the 50th anniversary of the murder of General Sandino by saying that the enemy forces in their area have been neutralized. This information is based on a report submitted yesterday by Commander Javier Carrion, an authority for the military region. It states that in Jalapa and Teotecacinte the revolution's programs are advancing because the contras have been repelled in their attempts to secure part of the area. Commander Carrion gave the locations of CIA camps in Honduras and listed the principal enemy actions in 1983. He said that in the last 8 months there have been 105 airspace violations, 72 provocations, and 85 clashes with the task forces. He added that these actions resulted in the kidnapping of 389 civilians, of whom 38 were murdered for working with the contras. Some 45 civilians engaged in picking coffee were also killed.

FDN SPOKESMAN DISCUSSES FIGHTING, ELECTIONS

PA222039 San Pedro Sula TIEMPO in Spanish 21 Feb 84 p 16

[Excerpts] San Pedro Sula -- "We wish to tell the world that our armed struggle in northern and central Nicaragua is continuing with great success, because we are holding the positions that we seized before, and we expect to seize more," journalist Oscar Leonardo Montalvan, spokesman for the Nicaraguan Democratic Force (FDN), told TIEMPO yesterday. Montalvan, whose nom de guerre is "the man from Radio Mil," is a former chief editor of the daily newspaper LA PRENSA and a former professor at the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua. He is now a member of the public relations editing staff of FDN, the political-military organization struggling to overthrow the Sandinist government in Nicaragua.

Recounting the FDN's latest military actions, "the man from Radio Mil" said that "in major commando operations, the FDN recently destroyed the installations of the Sandinists' [as published] Radio Venceremos, located at Casita Volcano, Chichigalpa, Chinandega Department. He stressed that on this occasion the FDN commandos had to fight guerrillas of the Salvadoran FMLN, who were fighting beside the Sandinists to defend the installations of Radio Venceremos and the logistics bases that they have installed at Casita Volcano. He denied that the attack against Casita Volcano, located near a small town of artisans and sugarcane growers, was launched from Honduras by the FDN commandos. "What happens," he said "is that the Marxist government in Nicaragua is constantly attacking this democratic country because their ideological structures are completely different."

Regarding the announcement of free elections in his country, the FDN spokesman said: "Hearing the nine commanders talk about elections is simply laughable; this is simply a propaganda campaign to distract the international public and make it believe that they have forsaken the totalitarian system and are taking a democratic, republican path." "How can anyone think that they will hold free elections when the new law on elections states that the FSLN will have control over the political media," he said, adding that "even more dangerous is the formation of mobs by the Sandinist government. These peripheral organizations are used as shock troops to disband any popular demonstration."

When questioned about the existing differences between FDN and ARDE [Democratic Revolutionary Alliance] Montalvan said: "The FDN has set no obstacle to a merger of both fronts. The objections have been raised by ARDE, and more specifically by Commander Eden Pastora, who insists that our front is composed of Somozists and former guardsmen of the tyrant."

When asked if they were receiving any U.S. military aid to pursue their struggle, he answered: "We get moral support, not only from the United States, but from other countries in the area and on the continent. However, we are all Nicaraguans, and we have rejected assistance from others who are not Nicaraguans, because we feel that the responsibility for this struggle falls on us exclusively." "As for the United States, I can tell you that even though some contend that they are not the gendarmes of the world, the truth is that they are indeed the gendarmes of democracy." "President Ronald Reagan is a farseeing man who knows that the East-West confrontation is already here in Central America and that Soviet expansionism is seeking to seize these countries," he said. "It is preposterous for some sectors to say that Honduras has become a U.S. satellite because the United States has installed two or three military bases here." "These are rash statements, because there are or have been U.S. military bases in Spain as well as airstrips in Germany and other European countries. That does not mean they are U.S. satellites or colonies. Only local fools could come up with such a gross misconception," he stressed.

15TH CENTRAL TRADE UNION CONGRESS CONTINUES

Veiga Reads Congress Report

FL202045 Havana Television Service in Spanish 1428 GMT 20 Feb 84

[Main report to the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions, CTC, read by Secretary General Roberto Veiga at Havana's CTC Headquarters -- live]

[Text] Comrade Fidel Castro, first secretary of the party Central Committee and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, comrades of the Politburo, of the Secretariat, and of the Central Committee, comrades of the Presidency, comrade delegates and guests, dear comrades:

In the year of the 25th anniversary of the triumph of the revolution, on the eve of a glorious date in our history, 24 February, which marks the beginning of the inevitable war conceived and organized by Jose Marti, we gather to open the 15th Congress of our dear Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [applause].

As we arrive at this important moment in the life of our organization, we examine all the efforts, battles, and feats that our working people have carried out over these years. We recall the beloved memory of our compatriots who have given their lives in the fulfillment of their duty as workers and fighters in Cuba and abroad. Today, we pay them the most emotional and revolutionary homage. [applause]

We dedicate this congress with all our hearts to the heroes who died in Grenada, to the construction workers and internationalists who laid down their tools and unhesitatingly took up rifles and, in an unfair fight, shed their workers' blood in the first military conflict with imperialist Yankee troops. [applause]

They died for Grenada and for the freedom, morale, dignity, and principles of Cuba. Their immortal example reaffirms our determination to raise the slogan of this congress with unstoppable force: Dedicated as never before to production and defense. As Fidel said: We will be like them at work and in combat. [applause]

This congress is taking place at a time when the policy of confrontation and force of the rightist and recalcitrant forces of the U.S. Administration has provoked an intensification of international tensions, and when the world is on the brink of war, the consequences of which could be fatal for the future of mankind.

As we begin the tasks of this meeting, we would like to reiterate the firm determination of the Cuban workers and their trade union organizations to continue to step up their activity of joining forces for the purpose of halting the sinister warlike plans encouraged by imperialist circles in the United States.

Five years have passed since the holding of the 15th [as heard] CTC Congress. They have been difficult and perilous years. We have been involved in simultaneous battles in every field. This is clearly demonstrated by the extraordinary militant drives of April and May 1980, when the workers and people, particularly the youth, achieved one of the most impressive political and moral victories in the history of the revolution.

This is how these past few years have been. They have been full of threats, danger, and challenges. But, above all, they have been years of victory. They have been the most fruitful and fertile years of the revolution. Economically speaking, we are now stronger and more efficient than ever. Militarily speaking, we are now firmer and more invulnerable than ever.

Cuba is a true moral and revolutionary power. It is endlessly loyal to socialism and the just cause of the workers and peoples. [applause]

We have reached this moment after discussing this congress' draft report. More than 2 million workers have participated in the discussions in more than 50,000 meetings. This once again demonstrates the educational and unitary force which labor democracy generates. It was a process that was carried out in an open, frank, and completely free climate. All workers in the country identified themselves with the draft report. In their discussions, the largest in the history of the Cuban labor movement, thousands of speeches have enriched the documents that will be discussed and approved by this congress. This process, as is customary among us, was free of limitations [economicismo], sectarianism, demagogy, divisionism, and useless arguments.

The workers exercised their rights and fulfilled their duties at the same time. The well-being of the homeland prevailed over any other consideration. The workers' unlimited confidence that the revolution, the party, and Fidel have done, are doing, and will always do the best for the people's welfare and security still prevails.

In these past few years, the struggle to meet our economic and social goals faced circumstances that were particularly difficult and adverse. The effects of the profound economic crisis affecting the capitalist world, increased by an upsurge in the brutal economic blockade which Yankee imperialism has been imposing on us for almost 25 years, have been a burden on the Cuban economy.

The constant threats of a military aggression, intensified by the current U.S. Administration, forced us to use abundant material and human resources to strengthen the defense of the fatherland.

Unexpected very adverse climatic conditions and very suspicious plagues and epidemics, which undoubtedly meant that the CIA hand was present, made us suffer heavy human and economic losses -- losses which would have been greater were it not for the extraordinary response of the workers and the promptness and effectiveness of the measures that were adopted. However, despite their magnitude and complexity, the difficulties did not intimidate us. On the contrary, they strengthened our workers' firm determination to succeed.

We have reached a rate of economic growth which we can describe as remarkable, especially if we take into consideration the untenable situation being experienced by today's capitalist world, and particularly the so-called Third World.

From 1978 to 1983 the gross social product, at constant prices, increased by more than 28 percent, or at an average annual rate of approximately 5 percent. In addition, we have increased efficiency in many aspects. Advances have been made in the country's industrialization, construction, agriculture, and all sectors of production. The progress made in public health, education, transportation, communications, and other services has been significant. These achievements have been possible through the sacrifice and gigantic, often heroic, efforts of the workers. They felt greatly inspired by Fidel's enlightening calls, the accords of the party's second congress and, more recently, the widespread repercussions of the resolution of the 6th party Central Committee plenum.

During this stage, burdened with great difficulties but advancing continuously and with certainty, the maturity and experience of the cadres and specialists of the economic front were manifested. During this stage, we repeat, the Cuban trade union movement tenaciously undertook to be equal to the circumstances.

If we were asked what the main achievement of the trade unions since the 14th Congress has been, we would respond without hesitation: the profound comprehension which has taken place in their ranks concerning the necessity of tirelessly fighting to bring about a solution to our vital economic problems. The trade unions, by means of the organization and development of socialist emulation, promoted a powerful mass movement that played a large part in the completion of the tasks of production and services.

The 40th meeting of the CTC National Council, which took place in 1980, incorporated essential changes in the socialist emulation system. The changes freed the system from bureaucratic complications, reduced its rates, and oriented it toward fundamentally stimulating concrete results in economic activity. Experience has confirmed the correctness of this decision. The CTC and the trade unions fulfilled their emulative commitments in honor of the second party congress. More than 7,200 work centers fulfilled their commitments one month early. The emulation registered similar results during the last 3 years. We dedicated that emulation to the 10th Congress of the World Trade Union Federation, the 4th Congress of the UJC [Union of Young Communists], and to this 15th CTC Congress.

From 1979 to date, the number of workers and work centers that fulfilled the socialist emulation has grown. Last year, more than 2.2 million workers and 16,000 work centers fulfilled their goals. Tens of thousands of workers have won admission to orders and have won medals and distinctions for exceptional merit in their work.

Frequently during these years, the second quarter has concluded with delays in the fulfillment of production plans due to the lack or instability of technical-military installations. On all of these occasions, encouraged by the firm determination to eliminate or reduce delays, the trade unions mobilized and discussed the situation with the workers. And the workers, as always, made their commitments, which materialized in the contribution of hundreds of millions of hours of voluntary labor.

A demonstration of these enormous efforts are the gigantic mobilizations performed on Red Sundays convoked by the CTC in honor of the Great October Revolution -- 13 every year -- and the participation of the workers in them, which have become a beautiful tradition of our people.

The trade unions have mobilized tens of thousands of workers for the tobacco, coffee, and citrus fruit harvests. The productivity of farm workers involved in these campaigns has increased as a result of the application of some technical-organizational measures, the superior development of the emulation, and greater attention to these activities. Therefore, the number of provisional workers mobilized for these tasks has declined and the cost of the tasks has been reduced.

Our congress proclaims with legitimate pride that the Cuban trade union movement will continue to perform voluntary labor, the cornerstone for the development of the revolutionary and communist consciousness of the workers, and that the movement has never and will never forget Comrade Fidel's call to never neglect volunteer labor and to remain faithful to the indelible legacy of Commander Ernesto Che Guevara. [applause]

The establishment of Workers Day, which began to take on relevant characteristics in the National Construction Workers Union, has been extended to other trade unions. This initiative has not only served to render deserved homage to the most outstanding workers of all the unions, but the struggle to win the honor of being the site of the main ceremony commemorating Workers Day in the provinces and municipalities has unleashed indescribable enthusiasm among the union members. It has contributed to the completion of our most important economic and ideological tasks.

Other new and valuable initiatives have promoted emulation in recent years. The Outstanding Workers Movement, begun in the Transportation Workers Union, has made progress. The movement now comprises 150,000 workers who have contributed more than 5 million trips and transported more than 7 million tons of cargo and 150 million passengers through voluntary labor in the past 5 years. The equivalent in salaries in this admirable effort amounts to more than 10 million pesos.

This movement has been extended to other sectors. The National Merchant Marine, Port and Fishing Workers Union ambitiously organized and developed the red-hot micro-emulation among the port workers brigades. The results have indicated an impressive growth in productivity and contributed to the reduction in payments for demurrage.

The National Trade Union of Agricultural and Forestry Workers shows important results in the current micro-emulation in dozens of activities, outstanding among which are those that impel the agricultural workers: the Millionaire and Millennium [millonario y milenario] Movement, the coffee and tobacco harvests, the reforestation efforts, and the Movement for Efficient Agricultural Machinery.

The National Construction Workers Union is reaping successes in the micro-emulations it is involved in, such as industrial projects, cement factories, quarries, and other activities. The National Light Industry Workers Union shows advances in the millionaire movement and in the textile plants and garment factories. The National FAR Civilian Workers Union has promoted great enthusiasm through an organized micro-emulation among workers of the various branches of the armed forces. The National Mining and Metallurgical Industry Workers Union is known for its triumphs in the micro-emulation to make and recover spare parts.

The National Chemical and Energy Industry Workers Trade Union has obtained encouraging results in the fiery micro-emulation [microemulacion en caliente] in electrical services, the special emulation to reduce the time in the maintenance of electric power plants, and particularly in the micro-emulation to conserve energy. The latter promoted a vast mobilization which resulted in savings of more than 56,000 tons of fuel, equivalent to more than 11 million pesos in foreign exchange.

The National Health Workers Union has organized the micro-emulation to improve services with great results. The National Cultural Workers Trade Union's Education, Culture, and Sports Section is promoting a micro-emulation to improve classes. The National Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union is experiencing progress with the model units movement [movimiento de las unidades modelo].

During 1983, our members' discussion and approval of the program of measures drafted by the government in response to the resolution of the Central Committee's 6th Plenum and its incorporation into the plan for the emulation of historical dates definitely contributed to enrich emulation and encourage workers in the struggle to save and become more efficient. This is a valuable experience which we must consolidate. The plan of measures for this year was approved, and this congress must reaffirm the firm determination of the union movement to make it an instrument of its daily battle.

In 1983, 200 million pesos were saved in supplies and 50 million pesos were recovered in raw materials. The increase in energy efficiency was noticeable. We saved 500,000 tons of conventional fuel in comparison with 1982. Savings efforts have been supported by the great work done in the making and recovery of spare parts. A total of 146 million pesos in manufactured and recovered spare parts was the result of this activity in 1981. In 1982, this amount increased to 278 million and, last year, our 290-million goal was surpassed by more than 90 million.

In 1983, particularly after the First National Forum on Spare Parts, priority attention was given to the recovery of these parts. To greet this congress we held the Second Forum a few days ago with unquestionable success. Our unions feel committed to fight to meet their goals. The unions have been able to get thousands of workers involved in making and recovering spare parts. We must continue to encourage the great mobilization of the masses in this sphere. We must increase the variety of spare parts, particularly those which substitute imports from the capitalist countries, as well as examine their demand and use to avoid unnecessary accumulations.

We cannot speak of the great efforts made by our workers to propitiate the solution of pressing problems being faced by our economy without praising the invaluable contribution of the innovators and efficiency experts. Their boundless energy and creativity is gathered in 5,200 committees made up of more than 60,200 members. In 1982, 9,892 innovations and efficiency projects were carried out. Its economic effects represented 320 million pesos. Last year, this contribution increased to more than 400 million.

The first ANIR [National Association of Innovators and Efficiency Experts] congress was held in 1981. The law on innovators and efficiency experts was approved in late 1982 and their rules were approved in January. Among other things, these rules provide the scale setting the amount and establishing the principles for remunerating innovators and efficiency experts. In this way, we solve two important problems contained in the discussions of the draft report: the monetary rewards for ANIR members, and the need to have mechanisms establishing and standardizing procedures for evaluating the economic effects of their work.

We must continue to promote the movement of innovators and efficiency experts and encourage an increase in their ranks. We must give more incentives to members. We must guarantee the drafting and perfecting of their projects and assist them in applying and disseminating their achievements.

Our economic tasks have been supported by regular assembly meetings on production and services, which in recent years have been efficiently complemented by assembly meetings of permanent representatives. Progress has been noted in these assembly meetings, but their quality could be markedly improved. To attain this, it is very important to guarantee that the administrative reports are clear and concrete. They should not be limited to the fulfillment of the plan, but should outline the problems affecting the results.

In addition, it must be guaranteed that precise, concrete, and convincing responses are given to problems brought up in these assembly meetings. Emulation can motivate the masses even more. More ambitious objectives should be established. What are these? We can do a lot to continue to save. The consumption of raw materials and materials in general can be reduced. Recovery of all these could be increased to the maximum. Better use can be made of manpower, machinery, and equipment. Much more energy, fuel, and lubricants can be saved.

The CTC and the National Energy Commission have convoked the first national forum on energy savings for next November. This congress should call on all our affiliates to actively participate in the assembly process that will precede this important event. Our congress should establish adequate processes in socialist emulation for awarding diplomas of merit for exemplary work in the conservation and rational use of energy. In all union sections we must clearly define, with the participation of the workers, what can be saved, how it can be saved, and how much what is being saved represents economically.

Of course, this is not just a problem of definitions. Principally, it is a problem of consistent and tenacious efforts to attain the objective being sought. The progress made in the struggle for quality must inspire us to continue to advance. Each new product which receives the state quality certification should be considered a victory of the workers and their unions.

In the industrial branches it is essential to redouble all efforts to fulfill the production plans with efficiency and quality. In the livestock-agricultural sector, production must be raised to the maximum; the best technologies should be utilized; the exploitation of machinery and equipment must be improved; and available resources must be more rationally utilized to raise yields and lower costs.

In the construction sector, it is necessary to support the unprecedented growth that will be experienced this year, taking into consideration the people's needs, increased productivity, enhanced quality, the best use of the equipment and industrial capacities, as well as standardization of the projects.

In the port-transportation-domestic economy network, we should maintain and enhance efficiency. In the national merchant marine, it is necessary to overfulfill the levels of planned yields. We must energetically advance all fishing production plans.

It is necessary to continue to develop the broad mass movement taking place in the health sector to provide better services to patients and their families. We must continue to involve the health sector workers in educational and scientific tasks to guarantee a constant improvement in the quality of services and attain the goal set by Fidel of transforming Cuba into a world medical superpower. [applause]

It is necessary to continue to raise the quality of education and formation and training of teachers and professors; improve school attendance; and improve the mechanisms linking education and production. It is important to bring our scientific research workers closer to the concrete needs of production and social life. It is necessary to continue to encourage all manifestations of national culture, creatively combining a high aesthetic and artistic level with the profound revolutionary concepts which encourage the educational work of the people and, mainly, of our youths and children.

It is essential to continue improving the quality of radio and television programming as well as the contents of the other means of mass dissemination in response to the growing cultural levels of our people and their needs for information, recreation, and political and ideological development.

It is essential to continue to improve the quality of passenger transportation, mainly that of Havana's buses as well as of other important cities. We must guarantee scheduled arrivals and the safety of railway service and national buses and give special attention to the needs of air transportation.

We must continue to struggle to broaden the progress made in communications, mainly urban telephone service, particularly in Havana.

It is necessary to continue struggling so that our public administration will be more efficient and less expensive. It is decisive to improve the quality of the services performed by members of the National Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union and to demand a more painstaking attitude in the observance of established norms, in the proper treatment of the public, in the technical training of the workers, and in the maintenance of the network of establishments.

It is essential to have service workers do their work with greater skill and efficiency. Their work is very important, not only because it complements economic activity, but because the public reacts to it. The great efforts of the revolution for the benefit of the public can be affected by the negative image of bad service if there are insensitive workers who mistreat their clients as a result of the tolerant attitude of their supervisors, and union leaders.

In the struggle to achieve these goals, the unions have the opportunity to take advantage of all the possibilities offered them by socialist emulation. It is necessary to eradicate the deficiencies that still exist in the organization and development of emulation in some work centers. This congress should throw itself into the job of increasing and enriching our emulative initiatives, keeping them from becoming routine and mechanical. The model units program should include all service activities, including teaching. The moment has come to impede the proliferation of emulations that result in duality, foster the excessive use of moral incentives, disperse the efforts made, confuse the workers and, in some cases, transgress the principle that emulation stresses the encouragement of economic activities. It is necessary to have emulation to foster and guide the enthusiasm and inexhaustible creative energy of the masses.

Socialist emulation should vigorously stimulate the great movement that now exists in favor of profitability. This is a very important subject, and this congress should take it up. We should institute the special presentation of pennants and honors to profitable enterprises, geographic entities, and those union and administrative bodies that contain no profitless enterprises.

The leadership of our party recently called upon all militants to study the factors that negatively affect enterprise profits and to stimulate the systematic struggle to increase profits. To support this study, the unions held more than 2,000 special meetings in all the enterprises and hundreds of plenary branch and sectorial meetings. This process culminated last month in the national meeting on profitability, which constituted a new and valuable push towards the objective of achieving and increasing the profitability of enterprises.

In the discussion of the draft thesis and, more recently, in the already mentioned study of profitability, the following external factors that affect enterprises were noted. The incongruity of some prices, critical problems as regards certain technical-material advice, decisions of higher organizations, and so forth. But many internal problems were also confirmed, of which the following are some of the most important: inadequate utilization of the work force; failure to implement wage policy; excess personnel on the payroll; increased consumption of materials, raw materials and, especially, fuel, electricity, and lubricants; underexploitation of installed capacities; improper use of machinery and equipment, especially in agriculture, construction, and transport; underexploitation of raw materials and industrial wastes; insufficient development of secondary and marginal production; deficiencies in the promulgation and implementation of norms for consumption, quality, and inventory; improper storage of raw materials, supplies, and semiprocessed products; absence of an adequate maintenance policy for machinery and equipment; insufficient technical preparation of workers; and the failure to present appropriate claims for violations of contracts.

The battle to eradicate factors that affect the maximum profitability of enterprises cannot be won without the participation of the masses.

In what place or in which production process is it possible to save material, labor, and financial resources to reduce production costs and attain profitability? This question and the actions resulting from its answer must guide the workers' daily activities and be permanently engraved in the emulations and in the assemblies of production representatives.

Our congress must mark a new phase to increase our economic work. The workers and their unions must carry out a decisive action in the struggle for profitability. We must be firmly determined to reach the party's 3d congress with a more efficient economy almost totally devoid of any unprofitable enterprises as a result of inefficiency, while those that remain will be the exception, justifiable simply for reasons of economic policy. This must be one of the main accords of this congress and a commitment to be enthusiastically undertaken by all workers and labor leaders. [applause]

Many workers who do not participate in direct production are repeatedly requesting an evaluation of their work in the struggle for greater efficiency. Our socialist emulation must find ways to respond to their just request.

It is indispensable to systematically apply, control, and review the norms for rational budget expenditures. The unions have made efforts to support the implementation of the system of economic management and planning. Its application, although still new and not complete, has been a factor of particular influence in the economic results achieved in increasing the cadres' economic awareness and in strengthening the workers' participation in enterprise activities.

During the discussion of the draft report, certain concern was expressed over the implementation of the system. It was noted that there was a tendency to adopt an attitude of tutelage in regard to enterprises. It was said that such an attitude limits their freedom to operate and the creative initiative of their leaders and workers. It was stated that existing rules for the creation of funds do not encourage certain enterprises to attain greater efficiency. Difficulties in accumulating funds for sociocultural activities were noted to a certain extent; this year's socioeconomic plan takes this situation into account, and in addition, other initiatives are being studied. One of these initiatives includes vacation plans.

In certain enterprise meetings authorized to create funds to provide economic incentives, the workers expressed disagreement with the method of distributing prizes because the bonus system establishes lower amounts for workers.

It was reported that when discussing the plan at the enterprises, the amount and requirements for obtaining the funds for material incentives were not included and that there was a delay in preparing and approving the regulations for awarding the prizes. It was noted that the majority of the regulations were difficult to understand. Our congress should recommend the examination of all these concerns regarding the funds for material incentives. Some work centers indicated that they do not understand why they should not be awarded prizes despite the fact that they did not fulfill the established indicators due to factors beyond their control. Nevertheless, it must be understood that the prize is in addition to the wage; thus the prize is neither lost nor won. What has not been done cannot be awarded a prize even though the will to do so was there. When the planned productive task is unfulfilled, the possibility of creating more wealth diminishes, wealth which, directly or indirectly, will make more products available to the population. For this reason, the income of the workers cannot be increased through the prize and, consequently, the increased demand for goods and resources cannot be met if they are not generated in the productive process. It is not possible to give what has not been created.

If as a general policy we do not demand material compensation for the income provided by means of the prize, its stimulating effect will be lost. There will be no possibility of making this income a reality. We believe this will be perfectly understood.

The participation of our members in the discussion of economic plans and in the struggle for their strict fulfillment has grown. Nevertheless, the workers have voiced their desire to more effectively participate in this effort.

Delays have been noted in dividing up plans and, consequently, in referring controlling figures to the enterprises and stores. In some cases, incomplete plans have been submitted for discussion, plans without approved categories, which have reduced the amount of time available to the workers to discuss the plans. Such situations improved last year.

It is up to the comrades responsible for this task whether they take the measures which resolve or exacerbate this situation. The fact that our economic relations are primarily with the socialist countries, and particularly with the Soviet Union, on a fair and equitable basis of exchange has been a determining factor in confronting and overcoming difficulties. Nevertheless, during these years there have been harmful effects on the Cuban economy as a result of the fluctuations of international prices and the destabilizing effects of unfair trade with developed capitalist countries.

This situation, along with the economic pressure of Yankee imperialism and other adverse factors mentioned at the beginning of this report, have caused us great inconveniences. They have provoked deficiencies in the planning calendar, inconsistencies in accounting figures, and delays in analyzing and breaking them down by centralized organizations and by local people's government organizations. Often, our plans have been approved with restrictions and conditions linked to the external sector.

As we recall this situation, we do not wish to justify those cases in which the figures could have been broken down more quickly, but we do want to explain the limitations that have in a certain way been responsible for the workers' not having sufficient time to analyze and discuss the plans as we would like them to.

There are other problems brought up by the workers in the discussion of the theories, to which the trade unions should respond with all possible energy. It has to do with the fact that when issuing control figures, some organizations do not adequately respond to proposals made in the assemblies called to discuss the control figures. This results in justified malaise, which is also manifested in other instances where the workers have repeatedly disapproved of the control figures. It has been pointed out in many assemblies the establishments do not have the necessary economic information. It is necessary to struggle to get the figures broken down at that level, as the discussion of the plan runs the risk of being superficial and of not arousing the desired interest among the workers.

Comrades, the sugar harvest has been one of our high priority tasks. Our trade union cadres have struggled indefatigably to contribute to the effort to carry out repairs, to help the sugar mills to grind the cane all the way down to the end, and do it efficiently, to select and organize the canecutting force, to specify the production commitments of each canecutter, machine operator, and group of workers, to prepare the ceremonies for awarding banners to the brigades, to impel the emulation and Millionaire Movement, to promote the mobilization of the members of all trade unions to support the clearing and planting of sugarcane, and to maintain a direct daily link with workers in factories and sugarcane plantations in order to stimulate and increase productivity and channel the worker's aspirations and anxieties. These tasks have become habitual activities. The main trade union cadres in the provinces are known among practically all of the canecutting brigades and the cadres in turn know many of the brigade members by name.

In the past few years, a noticeable sustained increase has been reported in sugar production. It has been possible despite the great damage done by blight and bad weather. The 1980-81 sugar harvest was called the best in history by our commander in chief. The 1982-83 campaign was carried out under extremely difficult conditions, with an abnormal amount of rainfall which affected us severely. This did not prevent us from producing more than 7 million tons of sugar. Men become giants in the face of nature's adversities. [applause]

The advances achieved in sugar production are closely related to the labor -- often heroic -- of the workers, as well as to the great technical-organizational efforts deployed in sugarcane culture and the considerable resources used in modernizing the sugar industry. All this has resulted in an appreciable increase in sugarcane harvests, in an increase in industrial capacity, and in the sustained improvement of the industry's efficiency.

In 1979, the consumption of fuel oil in the sugar mills was 430,000 tons. In the last sugarcane harvest it declined to 23,000. In 1970, 350,000 canecutters were needed.

In 1980, that figure declined to 130,858, and this year only 85,000 canecutters worked on a much larger cane harvest. [applause] The impressive achievements in the mechanization of the harvest have been decisive (?in the canecutters' production). The amount of cane cut by combines increased from 25 percent in 1971 to 45 percent in 1980, while in the present harvest it has reached 62 percent. [applause] These successes have helped humanize the hard work of cutting cane to a considerable extent. The decrease in canecutters has made it possible for the unions to increase their selection and organization, which, accompanied by the political, moral, and revolutionary climate prevalent in our sugar harvests, by the qualitative jump in the harvest emulation, by the organizational progress achieved, by the wage system adopted, and by the improved care of those workers, has led to an appreciable increase in productivity. From a daily average of 213 arrobas per canecutter in 1980, the figure increased to 291 arrobas in the last sugar harvest. For the present harvest, 307 arrobas were planned, and as of now we have reached 338 with only 16,228 voluntary canecutters. Years ago this would have seemed like a dream because, as is well known, some provinces placed a larger number of canecutters in the fields each harvest. Last year, the CTC issued instructions to all provinces to struggle to achieve the goal of having all their canecutting brigades cut 1 million arrobas of cane. This was made impossible by the adverse weather conditions already described, but almost 85 percent of the brigades cut more than 1 million arrobas. Six provinces reached this goal and some considerably surpassed it. The million-arroba movement in hand-cut cane has never before been so encouraging.

In like fashion, emulation in industry has improved. The incentives established for the special sugar harvest emulation have increased in quantity and variety. They have been broadened to include workers in the sugar and in mechanized cane cutting. From 1978 to date, sugar harvest workers have acquired more than one half million articles; furthermore, in this plan 4,500 motorcycles, 1,300 automobiles, and more than 3,000 tourist trips to socialist countries have been offered. Of these trips, more than 2,000 have been offered at 50 percent of cost in the past 2 years. Also, in 1982 and 1983, a total of 300 outstanding sugar industry workers received free trips for two to socialist countries. From 1981 to date, almost 5,000 workers were able to acquire construction materials under this plan. And 300 dwellings were awarded to the most productive workers last year. Those who drive their cars along highways and avenues are no longer the ostentatious millionaires of yesteryear. Now, among other workers, those who drive their cars are the modest "millionaires" of today, the humble men, [applause] the poor men of the people who have reached "millionaire" status by watering the cane fields with their sweat while becoming unequivocal symbols of the new values that our society ennobles.

These incentives are an expression of the people's recognition. Therefore, they constitute a great motivation, a motivation with a gret moral content. To guarantee that those who deserve these incentives get them is a responsibility that the labor movement cannot delegate and a principle which workers must demand be strictly respected.

The weekly rest period for sugar mill workers during the sugar harvest began in 1981. Many salary measures that benefitted the sugar agroindustrial workers in an extraordinary way were approved. These measures include the implementation of the branch wage rate [coeficiente salarial ramal] which increased workers earnings by 15 percent and manual cutting activities by 25 percent. An old wish of sugar workers was fulfilled.

The wage fund for sugar workers was increased by approximately 200 million pesos per year in the past 3 years. Their average salary increased by approximately 40 percent. One of the most forgotten and worst paid jobs in the old capitalist times has become one of the best protected and well-paid jobs in this radiant and hopeful present of socialism. [applause]

In these years, greater attention has been paid to the problems affecting the sugarcane workers. Thousands of housing units have been constructed for them and many more thousands are in various phases of construction. Preferential attention has been given to the machinery at the sugar mills. Food and medical attention have improved. Special clothing has been designed for canecutters and the quality of their tools has improved.

The workers are now engaged in the struggle to realize a large and efficient sugar harvest. All the provinces are struggling to achieve millionaire status in the manual cutting of sugarcane, and many of them are trying to reach that level for the first time in mechanized cutting. This will be a peak year for the Millionaire Movement in manual canecutting and it will also be the year of the great takeoff of the Millionaire Movement in mechanized canecutting.

On 31 January, we already had 147 millionaire manual canecutting brigades. On the same date last year there were 111 -- and that was a good year. These successes show how much we can still achieve. What has already been achieved is no more than a new starting point. Sugar production is the fundamental pillar of our economy. We will contribute with all our strength to reach its optimum level of efficiency. That is the inevitable objective of all Cuban workers and trade union members.

Beginning in 1980, the workers and wages organization received a great impetus. The general wage reform was approved. The trade unions worked hard to aid in its progressive application. This measure benefitted more than 2.5 million workers, especially those with the lowest incomes. It meant an annual wage increase of more than 450 million pesos and an increase in the average salary by almost 15 percent. Over 300,000 workers receive additional pay for abnormal working conditions. Over 500,000 receive payment for seniority. Night pay and lodging pay has been extended to several different activities.

Two old problems, which were discussed in our last congress -- the elimination of subgroups 1 and 2 in agriculture and the workers' right to an annual vacation -- were definitively solved. Also, a satisfactory response was given to the problem of the accumulated vacation time of workers in the various sectors.

By linking the application of reforms to a group of measures aimed at improving the organization of work in 1980 and 1981, the unions favored a thorough process of adjusting norms as a result of noncompliance with guidelines established for their review in previous years. That process was not easy or error-free. In some places, the norms were reviewed in a shallow manner and involved too much bureaucracy.

Generally, in those cases we take actions promptly and tactfully to avoid unnecessary tension. We also had to take steps in certain work centers where an effort to implement the link between wages and norms was being made hastily, without meeting minimum conditions for it.

From our previous congress to date, the number of workers included in the bonus system [sistema de prima] has increased fourfold and the number of covered workers [los vinculados] has doubled. More than 930,000 workers are receiving bonus benefits and more than 1.2 million work under the principle of a link between wages and norms; in other words, most of the workers whom it has been feasible to put under this system thus far. In this regard, the unions met the goals that they had set. One of the most important accords of the historic 13th CTC Congress was basically implemented and a decisive step was taken in the application of the principle of socialist distribution wages commensurate with work.

We have organized the team of workers specialized in construction and the payment per field sown in agriculture. The latter resulted in better use of the workday in that sector. Unquestionable progress has been made in the effort to solve the problem which Fidel criticized in his enlightening conclusions of the 14th CTC Congress. He noted that the workday in the agriculture sector had been reduced to 4 or 5 hours.

All these measures have greatly helped to compensate for the wage expenses caused by the reforms. These measures helped in increasing economic efficiency and, particularly, productivity.

From 1979 to 1982, productivity, at constant prices, increased by an average annual rate of 7.3 percent. The results of these measures could have been better if more had been demanded in the regulation of work, the implementation of the link between salary and norms, the appropriate use of bonuses, and any other payment system in effect.

The implementation of bonuses has contributed to savings and an improvement in quality. However, we have yet to utilize their full potential. We must increase the number of workers under the bonus system. We must improve and update its regulations. We must make the regulations more understandable for workers and set goals high enough so that reaching them will represent a considerable effort but not an impossible task.

The expansion and perfection of the bonus system can help considerably in increasing the adjustable part of wages, which we must increase by more than 20 percent.

There are deficiencies in updating the requirements for technical, workers', service, and administrative positions. We must make more progress in this task.

The discussion of the draft report showed that there are many deficiencies in the effort to promote the graduation of empirical technicians and their wage adjustment, particularly in the case of older workers with proven experience. The unions must work very hard to have administrative organizations solve this problem.

Direct hiring of the labor force was approved in the country in 1980, with the exception of Havana and City of Havana provinces. Its application, in comparison with previous stages, has not resulted in alarming fluctuations in the work force. However, we must stress that many workers noted that in certain places, established terms for the trial period are being violated and specific contracts are being written for vacant positions. Unions must resolutely fight this.

Most workers who have positions under the norm and salary system have already assimilated this system. Of them, more than 90 percent work with norms. Some 77 percent of these norms are basic, and 23 percent of them are of a semitechnical nature. We cannot hope to go on to an optimum level right away, which would mean making all norms technical. However, we feel that this congress must be bent on reversing the existing correlation. We must substantially increase the semitechnical and technical norms.

We have observed the progress made in the extension of payments for abnormal working conditions, night pay, lodging pay, review of rates, and other salary measures. But in the discussions of the draft report, certain workers called for additional pay through some of these measures. We have explained that we will continue to apply many of these measures gradually, but, of course, bearing in mind the needs of the economy and the country's financial possibilities and knowing that their implementation must foment greater economic efficiency. In every work center, where possible, the application of these salary measures must be linked to the adoption of others aimed at perfecting the quality of norms and the organization of work. By proceeding in this manner, the increases experienced in the average wage would be compensated for through higher increases in labor productivity.

Last year we began the implementation of piecework in industry. In the next few years, we must conclude this effort in that sector.

Agriculture has begun to introduce the permanent production brigades. This initiative has fomented a noticeable growth in production and productivity. It has also permitted simplification and flexibility in leadership structures. It has allowed the implementation of the plan with greater energy, the application of internal economic estimates, and the use of a more comprehensive wage incentive system.

Some pilot plans have been implemented in light industry with identical results. This has been done through the organization of brigades based on similar principles. We must promote the spread of such experience. Conditions have been created so that, after this congress, the unions will make a qualitative jump that will allow us to achieve better ways to organize work.

From the 14th CTC Congress to date, the frequency of job-related accidents dropped, particularly after the accords approved in this regard by the party's Politburo in late 1981. Notwithstanding, this downward trend is too slow and is not in line with the efforts made to accomplish this task. Statistics are still too high. More than 300 workers die every year as a result of these accidents. Actually, it is approximately 300 workers because the figure dropped somewhat this year. This is enough to worry us. We don't need to add the limitations and suffering experienced by the workers and their families due to disabling injuries and the harm that these accidents cause to the country's economy.

In many meetings where we discussed the draft report, it was said that we were lacking safety equipment. It is true that we have lacked certain indispensable equipment, in some cases due to economic limitations, particularly because of a need for free foreign exchange and, in others, because of insufficiencies in planning and a lack of effort. Aware of this situation, in comparison with 1983, the government tripled the foreign exchange resources available for this year to obtain the means in the capitalist world that must of necessity be obtained in that market. If the state organizations, with the participation of unions, plan to use these resources well, we might be able to alleviate this lack of safety equipment.

However, we would like to draw your attention to the following: We must not be deceived by the assumption that the high number of job-related accidents is mainly due to a lack of safety equipment. Let's see: Of the 49,101 accidents that occurred in the first 9 months of 1983, only slightly over 4,000 occurred because of a lack of the necessary safety equipment. What then are the main reasons for these accidents? The presence of unsafe conditions, whose solution in many cases do not require resources, but more initiative and responsibility. Other reasons for these accident are: a lack of discipline by workers who violate safety regulations and sometimes take action as a result of a false sense of courage; the incorrect use or nonuse of indispensable safety equipment; deficient training; the poor dissemination of safety regulations and rules among workers; and, in general, a weak administration and union. Unions must take more vigorous steps to fight these evils. Our congress must urge union and administrative leaders and all the workers to constantly fight to make substantial specific progress in the battle to reduce job-related accidents. [applause]

Comrades, in recent times the labor movement has participated in the firm offensive unleashed against antisocial crimes and attitudes in the economy. These crimes and attitudes have been detected in certain work centers. They go against the prevailing norms in our society and have nothing to do with our morals and principles. The small number of unscrupulous individuals who are trying to obtain easy money by resorting to all kinds of criminal actions have been dealt a harsh blow as a result of the exemplary zeal of the state organizations tasked with fighting and severely punishing them, greater control in the economic sector, and the workers' rejection.

Of course, we cannot lower our guard. Some of these individuals are still present in our society. Their attitude contrasts with the restraint, austerity, unselfishness, and spirit of struggle and sacrifice of our working people. Our congress, aware of the workers' firm determination expressed in the discussion of the draft report, must urge unions to continue, with renewed impetus, the all-out war against the parasites, embezzlers, thieves, and all the causes and conditions which propitiate this type of behavior. [applause]

We began to notice worrisome signs of a deterioration in discipline in certain activities and labor centers in mid-1979. Certain individuals who were not fulfilling their duties and a few lumpen, provoking the just indignation of most workers, were using the law to violate it with impunity. We were facing untenable deeds which responded to a marked lack of demands and deficiencies in our labor law.

In repeated statements, the party's Central Committee and Comrades Fidel and Raul called for the adoption of specific measures, calmly but sternly and thoroughly, to confront and find substantive solutions to this problem. The actions taken in response to these timely calls were decisive. Important advances have been made in the struggle to strengthen labor discipline. However, there are still places where the results are unsatisfactory. This justifies the need to increase union action to contribute to consolidating what we have achieved thus far and to make new progress.

The unions worked very hard to promote the workers' fighting ability and spirit of self-discipline and to combat weakness, political chicanery, lack of punctuality, absenteeism, and lack of discipline. This constituted an effective support for the vigorous reaction observed in all administrative organizations and the implementation of legal provisions adopted to confront these problems. These provisions include Laws No 32 and 36.

The 40th Meeting of the CTC National Council in 1980 analyzed and agreed to support both laws. In many meetings to discuss the draft report, we analyzed the implementation of these laws. What is our opinion of this? The 32 and 36, as they are usually referred to, have been very effective tools in the struggle to reinforce labor discipline. That is unquestionable. But this does not mean that examples cannot be cited in which courts have revoked or modified sanctions imposed by the administration, invoking Law 32, and have thus granted the corresponding indemnifications in favor of workers. Examples can also be cited in regard to a matter that is not often mentioned: when the administration does not apply 32 in cases of lack of discipline which fully justify its application. Errors have been made through excesses and omissions. They must be firmly fought. We must demand that intermediate and higher levels of the administration apply Law 36 to those who repeatedly arbitrarily resort to Law 32. [applause] And those who do not apply it out of tolerance or do not fulfill basic duties inherent in their responsibilities should also be punished by this law.

It seems that we need the establishment of a legal mechanism that promotes the rehabilitation of workers who maintain satisfactory labor behavior after being punished by sanctions prescribed in Law No 32. The same should be done with Law No. 34.

An important step taken recently, and one which has helped labor discipline, is the drafting, approval, and implementation of branch and internal disciplinary regulations [reglamentos disciplinarios ramales e internos]. More than 2 million workers participated in this process.

During these past few years, the unions have been bent on guiding and educating workers in the fulfillment of their duties without weakening their historical obligation to constantly fight to make their rights prevail as promised by the revolution. Every 6 months over the past 3 years, more than 30,000 union leaders and members reviewed the labor records of workers in almost every enterprise and unit included in the budget. In the six inspections carried out, we discovered more than 12 million violations. Almost all of them have been rectified. We were making these union inspections without the legal provisions to back them up. However, no minister or chief of any organization, leader, or administrative official questioned them. On the contrary, they supported and encouraged them. This shows the close and exemplary ties existing between our union and administrative organizations. We are all united to consolidate and advance the socialist economy and to improve the standard of living and living conditions of the workers and all the people.

However, this does not mean that there were not isolated cases of differences between the administration and the union and its members in certain work centers. This occurred because of disagreements in the ways to apply a guideline or to tackle certain problems, and even because of errors made by the administration when implementing hasty measures without a previous political analysis and the necessary consultations with the workers. In most cases, the unions learned of these problems quickly and took immediate steps to find the best solutions. However, we must admit that in some cases they did not act with the necessary speed and energy or failed to demand responsibility from those who had caused these conflicts. We must prevent the repetition of similar situations.

In the past 5 years, the CTC and the unions have held several seminars on labor and social laws. An average of 48,500 union leaders and members and 59,000 members and delegates of the labor councils have been trained each year. In the past 3 years, eight study circles were held with more than 2 million workers participating in each. Approximately 100 labor leaders took courses on labor law at intermediate-level technical schools, while an additional 1,300 workers are currently taking these courses.

Labor councils which, as we all know, are organized and directed by the CTC, have solved approximately 123,000 labor claims in the past 5 years. On 23 September, labor councils will mark their 20th anniversary, which should be an occasion to encourage these devoted workers who, dedicating part of their rest period, have responded to this beautiful and important responsibility.

The 14th CTC Congress recommended that the government promulgate a law governing relations among the administration, union, and workers. Last year, the Council of State decreed Law No 74 establishing the general guidelines for labor agreements. The experience of the unions and this law can decisively help to eradicate the many deficiencies observed in the drafting of these documents and in the systematic verification of their contents.

In March 1982, we created the committee in charge of presenting a draft labor code to the party higher levels and government. This code will soon be completed. The unions must create the conditions for organizing and directing discussions with workers in the next few months.

In January 1980, Law No 24 on social security went into effect. Our government has satisfied the workers' aspiration as stated in the accords of the historical 13th CTC Congress. After that date, social security benefits increased by more than 100 million pesos per year. To favor workers who did not register their time in service between 1950 and 1970, the new law makes it possible to obtain credit through oral evidence. This congress must urge unions to struggle so that this important task can be completed within this year.

In the discussion of the draft report at a few work centers, some women workers proposed that they be retired at age 50. This makes us ponder. It is not good for the labor movement to harbor hopes regarding the possibility of lowering the retirement age for women because a 50-year-old woman cannot be viewed as incapable and much less physically unable to work. [applause] In addition, the efforts that society has made to favor the incorporation of women into the labor force and increase their professional and technical ability must be repaid.

In 1953, life expectancy was 60 years. Now, this life expectancy is closer to 74 years because of a higher standard of living and the many measures adopted by the revolution in the health sector. [applause] Precisely because of this reason, when we were drafting the new social security law, some comrades wanted to propose increasing the retirement age. Although we listened to it, such a proposal was not advisable politically speaking. What was the final decision? To keep the same retirement age we have now, but to give economic incentives to workers who decide to continue working after the deadline granted by the law for requesting retirement. To all this we must add that lowering the retirement age for women workers by 5 years would seriously affect our economy and become a heavy burden on the social security budget.

If this proposal were accepted, what would happen in the light industry, where great efforts are being made to stabilize and improve the work force to increase production and productivity levels with the intention, among others, of meeting the needs for working clothes and stores, which workers are justly and repeatedly requesting. What would happen in this industry if all of a sudden a large percentage of its women workers -- particularly the best qualified and experienced -- were to retire? What would happen in areas such as education, public health, commerce, and others where women workers play an important role?

If this proposal were accepted, untold damage would be caused to the economy which could not be easily overcome. In addition, we must recall that our social security system is one of the most advanced in the underdeveloped countries and even better than those of certain developed capitalist countries.

Prior to the victory of the revolution, 50 percent of the country's workers had no rights as regards social security. Now, they all have these rights. Social security expenses surpass 800 million pesos per year. In Cuba, the government now spends in 12 days what was spent on social security in 1 year prior to 1959. [applause]

We must not forget that retiring women workers at an earlier age could prompt reluctance by administrative entities to hire women. This could imply a regression in the progress made in the struggle for women's equality through their incorporation into the labor force.

Some workers who are approaching the end of their working lives have proposed that when they retire and subsequently acquire another job, they be paid 100 percent of the wages for their new jobs. They allege that if they do not do the work, others who will have to be paid at the full rate will. Therefore, the economy will not be affected. Viewed in this way, this argument seems to be irrefutable. Certainly there are cases in which it can be of benefit to the country if retired workers take jobs and receive 100 percent of the wages for the work they do.

Well now, we should view this problem from all angles. If we agreed that all retired people who are working under contract are entitled to receive 100 percent of the established wage for their new job, we would be encouraging almost all workers to retire as soon as they put in the required amount of time and reach the required age. Almost no one would receive social security benefits, which are intended to prolong working activity. Everyone would try to get a contract job after retirement and, in that way, to increase his income. If it became recognized that retirement income had become a kind of plus to which a person had the right when he had worked a certain number of years and reached a specified age, it is not difficult to predict that the 40,000 who now retire annually would multiply.

Currently, more than 240,000 workers have put in sufficient time and are old enough to retire, yet they continue working. If retirees could receive full pay for subsequent jobs, the supply of job-seeking retirees would greatly exceed the number of possible job openings. Consequently, there would be fewer contract workers employed. Such a situation would cause tens of thousands of workers, who are still performing magnificent work in their places of employment and who are observing exemplary discipline, to be out of a job, because after they retired they would be unable to find the contract jobs they had hoped for. The country's economy would lose an incalculable treasure of qualification and experience. It would have to spend many millions of additional pesos on social security, to the detriment of our internal financial balance.

We are in agreement. We should examine this proposal, but examine it with much care, reviewing in detail all the pros and cons and then reconcile the aspirations of some of our old, admired and respected workers with the interests of society as a whole. [applause]

During the period covered, from 1979 to the 2nd quarter of 1983, about 1 million electrical appliances were distributed under the CTC domestic trade plan. Generally, the principle of the assembly deciding who would have the right to purchase followed that used in the sale of automobiles and motorcycles. There have been difficulties in the clothing and shoe sectors during this period in the production and service assemblies. These difficulties were also noted in discussions of the draft report.

Because of the importance of the problems, they were the subject of study by the party and government leadership and steps were taken, the favorable effects of which began to be felt in the second quarter of 1983. Conditions are currently being created to increase national production and reports are being prepared and studied for importation and distribution for 1984 and 1985. Projections are also being made for the 5-year period from 1986 to 1990 with the purpose of giving a definite response to this situation in qualitative as well as quantitative terms. [applause]

During the period covered by this report, the workers' dining room service was critically analyzed. Some measures were adopted which have contributed to the improvement of this service. Ninty-three percent of the workers dining rooms applied the optional consumption system. In the case of Havana City Province, the direct supply by the 19 April Food Company to the dining rooms of an important group of workplaces has been an initiative which has noticeably improved the workers' diet. The development of self-consumption [possibly in-house dining facilites] in the sugar, agricultural, and forestry companies has extraordinarily benefited the food quota supplied daily to the workers' dining rooms in these sectors. The service given by the workers' dining rooms continues to improve. It is a task that should receive perferential attention from the trade unions.

Despite the great efforts that have been made, the problem of housing continues to be one of the most pressing. This was confirmed in the discussion of the draft report -- particularly in the sectors that did not have the possibility of organizing micro-brigades. We must say that during these years, the housing construction micro-brigades, created through the personal impetus of Comrade Fidel, constituted an original and revolutionary initiative which contributed to the solution of the housing problem for more than 100,000 workers and their families. [applause]

In the years following the triumph of the revolution, the accumulated needs were gigantic. The limited construction resources in those days could not be dedicated exclusively to the building and repairing of housing. Last year, studies were concluded on this critical problem. The studies took into account factors that were brought up by our workers in the discussion of the draft report. The studies were carried out for the purpose of evaluating this problem and to progress little by little toward its solution. This, of course, requires time and numerous resources. The country is studying the economic bases that sustain the future programs for housing construction. The material basis with which to make these investments has increased ambitiously during the last few years. The capacity for production of construction materials and most especially, of cement, has grown and will continue to grow.

Priority has been given to the distribution of construction materials to the people. This has played an important part in the increase in do-it-yourself housing construction and maintenance. New possibilities are appearing. In the past 3 years, an average of more than 60,000 housing units per year were constructed by citizens themselves.

This is an alternative which could help in tackling this problem in the majority of the provinces even though, as Comrade Fidel has noted, in the cases of Havana, Santiago de Cuba, and other cities having very limited open spaces, it will be necessary to build tall buildings. These provinces will have to be assigned priority in our state plans.

This year the distribution of building material to the population will increase by 13 percent. The number of dwellings to be built by state enterprises will increase to 35,000, and doing-it-yourself construction will continue to be encouraged. There are different views in the provinces on the distribution of housing built by state brigades to the workers. It seems that it would be advisable to study this situation to try, to the degree possible, to define and unify all these views.

If in the previous congress working women numbered 760,794, representing 30 percent of the country's work force, today this number has grown to 1,044,000 or 38.9 percent of the work force. [applause] In hiring women, there have been cases where they have been required to have qualifications not listed in the job description as well as other requirements, which are practices which we must resolutely struggle against.

In response to a claim submitted by working women during the 14th congress, the Education Ministry created the position of teachers' aide in primary education to give adequate attention to the children after school hours. It is necessary to pay greater attention to the work of these aides so that they may fully comply with their activities.

Even though the capacities at child care centers have been constantly expanded, the demand continues to grow. We must struggle to make these centers' capacities expand to the maximum, and reduce the permanent closing time. There have been reports of deficiencies in the quality of service at the dining halls of some day schools in primary education. This has also been the case with the children's vacation plan, because in some places the areas used do not meet the required conditions and the lack of recreational, cultural, and sports activities do not stimulate the children's participation. These problems must be examined with the appropriate agencies to give them the best possible solution.

Despite the fact that the system of sales for working women is regulated in the network of stores with industrial products, some problems still prevail in implementing the system. The Domestic Trade Ministry recently promulgated a resolution to rectify this situation. Despite all the difficulties, our workingwomen are advancing at the vanguard in fulfilling che tasks assigned to them. Work centers with the designation national vanguard, where a female work force is in the majority, are many. Working women participate with great discipline in the labor guard force to help protect their work centers, and in an impressive way, massively join the Territorial Troops Militia, ready to defend the fatherland in the face of any type of imperialist aggression as worthy heirs of the Mambi and revolutionary traditions legated to us by Mariana Gratjales, Celia Sanchez, and Haydee Santamaria. [prolonged applause]

The number of working youths continues to grow. They already represent one third of the country's work force, and are a determining factor in the technician categories at the intermediate and superior levels. The youth technical brigades, the shock works, and other initiatives sponsored by the Union of Young Communists [UJC] have constituted valuable contributions to the fulfillment of our work centers' economic tasks. The participation of youths in emulation has grown with the introduction in 1981 of the category "best young worker" in the units, stores, and enterprises as well as in the unions' intermediate and superior levels.

The labor honor book was set up in more than 40,000 union sections. It is necessary to use it and care for it, and to make sure that all ceremonies for entering names in it are solemn occasions so that having one's name in it may be the aspirations of all youths and direct encouragement for being incorporated in union tasks.

In recent years, tens of thousands of ceremonies have been held to incorporate youths into the work force. It is very important that they be given the greatest attention from the very first day of their incorporation into the work force, and that all efforts are redoubled so that they will make their own the best traditions of struggle of their work centers. The fulfillment of UJC-CTC joint directives had a positive result on the incorporation of working youths into union activism and the fulfillment of all tasks.

In recent years there has been significant progress in the UJC-CTC joint work. Both organizations agree on the need to find more adequate methods and forms so that the directives jointly issued by them can be brought up to date and given renewed thrust by the union sections and UJC local committees.

At the end of last year, we held the first union conference of working youths. The results of this conference should be examined by our congress and made a part of its agreements and resolutions.

Impressive achievements were made in the cultural and technical improvement of the workers from the 14th Congress to date. More than 1 million workers graduated from the various educational subsystems and more than 800,000 workers are attending school right now. We were victorious in the battle for sixth grade. [applause] To Cuban union members, this important deed represented a new starting point on the road to greater achievement.

To reach a minimum of a ninth grade education by 1985 was one of the main accords of the 14th CTC Congress. On that occasion, Fidel said: I dare say that by the next congress we will be very advanced in the battle for the ninth grade. Today we can tell Fidel with deep satisfaction that our objective to get our workers to complete a ninth grade education is progressing triumphantly. Some 583,000 workers have either completed or are studying at this educational level. We have proudly surpassed the goal set to greet this congress. [applause]

Certain unions in the provinces and several municipalities have satisfactorily completed this task. Cienaga de Zapata, one of the most remote, backward, and abandoned areas in Cuba before 1959, where more than 90 percent of the people were illiterate, is now one of the territories in our homeland which shows the advances of the revolution in every area. Its workers were the first to proudly announce the victory achieved in the battle for the ninth grade. [applause]

The same historical scenario where our people inflicted the first great military defeat on imperialism in Latin America is the first to celebrate this great new victory against illiteracy in our continent. This confirms the force and unstoppable drive of socialism socialism. [applause] This congress will confirm to Fidel that we will do everything possible to victoriously complete this task. The 16th CTC Congress will announce to the world that Cuban workers have a minimum education of ninth grade or more and are advancing toward higher educational goals. [applause]

In these past 5 years, 55,700 workers completed pre-university education. Approximately 50,000 graduated from the university and 113,000 are attending it. In Cuba, half of the university students are active workers. This is the result of the enormous efforts made by the revolution to promote the registration of workers in the university. Correspondence courses [cursos dirigidos] for workers, organized by our universities, have begun to bear fruit. The unions and all interested sectors must give them more support.

The CTC, in coordination with the Ministry of Higher Education, held the first national meeting of workers who are university students last year. This event approved a group of measures to promote the workers' continued attendance at the university. From 1959 to date, more than 300,000 workers have completed various courses to improve their qualifications. The labor movement must increase its efforts to promote the training of qualified workers and intermediate-level technicians and more directly participate in planning programs organized for this purpose.

We must tackle this task with the same perseverance, energy, and vehemence with which we have victoriously begun the great educational battles for the sixth and ninth grades. More than 10,000 schools have been sponsored by work centers, which have promoted meetings between students and experienced workers and countless cultural and recreational activities, supported trips to rural areas, and in many cases embellished the school installations.

More than 17,000 technical workers are members of scientific and technical circles. Some 97,000 workers are pioneer guides highly involved in helping with extracurricular activities and vacation plans.

The unions include more than 100,000 workers who are enthusiasts in the various cultural areas. There has been an increase of 25,000 workers in comparison with the figure presented at our previous congress. More than 10,000 work centers are greeting this congress by achieving "distinguished in culture" status. The goal for the next 5 years is to surpass 20,000.

Workers who are amateur artists have performed in many events and festivities, particularly the carnival, where they have assumed the greatest share of the responsibility for the musical programs. We are lacking musical instruments, wardrobes, audio equipment, instructors, and other resources. This problem must be realistically confronted. We cannot ignore our economic limitations. We must take better care and make better use of the instruments and other resources. We must make maximum use of culture centers and develop the imagination in the search for every feasible solution.

It is very important to support the promotion of voluntary activities and monitors at the work centers to make up for the deficit of instructors. We have 55 schools where 1,400 activists and monitors are being trained. This initiative, together with the Juan Marinello contingent organized by the National Cultural Workers Trade Union, can extraordinarily contribute to the expansion and consolidation of the movement of workers who are art enthusiasts.

On their own initiative, the unions have held many important literary contests and actively participated in the CTC-sponsored Ruben Martinez Villena contest. Thousands of workers have participated in these activities.

An average of more than 1,140,000 workers per year participate in 31 of the sports activities included in the INDER [National Institute of Sports, Physical Education, and Recreation] calendar. In these past few years, the CTC has held the fourth, fifth, and sixth workers' games. The number of participants in these events have been increasing gradually until reaching more than 2 million in the last games.

The labor movement has been working to respond to the party's call for the systematic and collective participation in sports through the organization of sectorial and territorial games, marathons, walks to historical places, and other activities.

Approximately 10,000 work centers are greeting this congress by achieving the "distinguished in sports" status. The goal for the next few years is to surpass 20,000. This congress will discuss a draft resolution aimed at strengthening the work of unions in this sphere as a contribution to the overall formation of the man socialism seeks to have.

Attention to social-labor circles, which the labor movement has in the capital, has improved. However, we must make better use of these installations and demand better service from them. We must increase and diversify the program of its cultural, sports, and recreational activities.

In the past 3 years, outstanding workers were offered 5,857 tourist trips to socialist countries with a 50 percent reduction in price. In 1982 and 1983, our commander in chief assigned 1,232 free tourist trips abroad for the country's outstanding workers. In these cases, the CTC financed the clothing, shoes, domestic transportation, travel papers, and others. These trips are given in addition to those mentioned before enjoyed by sugar harvest workers. Others are given to cadres with great achievements in the areas of production and services. For this year, Comrade Fidel assigned 2,000 free trips abroad to be granted to outstanding workers. [applause]

In our revolutionary and socialist Cuba, the principle that workers, particularly the best workers, have top priority to go abroad on vacation is being firmly consolidated. [applause]

During the past 5 years, through the CTC-INTUR [National Institute of Tourism] plan, more than 115,000 workers have enjoyed the facilities offered at the country's beaches at very reasonable prices. This figure increases to more than 400,000 when the workers' families are included

The workers have mentioned deficiencies in the CTC-INTUR plan in the past few years. More recently, they mentioned these problems in meetings held to discuss the draft report for this congress. The bad shape of installations and irregularities in transportation services were mentioned. The repair of these installations was suggested. The workers even suggested that the number of these installations be increased. We have studied this situation. INTUR has limited material and human resources assigned to the repair and expansion of tourist installations. Objectively speaking, INTUR cannot obtain more resources because of the higher priority given to other construction programs.

We must stress that this year we will begin the largest construction plan in our history. To this limitation of material resources, we must add the fact that INTUR is involved in a plan to earn free foreign exchange through international tourism amounting to millions of pesos, and also has a sales plan involving millions of pesos through the services of its tourist network. Workers are interested to see INTUR carry out these plans because, on the one hand, the free foreign exchange obtained through this international tourism is indispensable for acquiring medicines, medical equipment, material to increase the construction of houses, supplies, raw materials, and many other items the country needs. On the other hand, the funds collected from services rendered to the people by the tourist network results in a decline in monetary circulation, thus contributing to maintain, to a large degree, a balance in internal finances. This benefits everybody.

Since the material and human resources assigned to INTUR are not sufficient to even respond to the commitments already mentioned, it is not foreseeable that it can use any resources to repair the installations under the CTC-INTUR plan. This is a plan that, because of the prices involved, is unprofitable. The same applies with transportation. Bus services are still insufficient and do not satisfy demand. Therefore, it is impossible to fully offer the services that this plan demands, which calls for the transportation of passengers from distant places at a price that does not even cover gasoline.

Comrades, we frankly believe that the CTC-INTUR plan fulfilled its mission. Now it seems that the time has come for new ideas.

A few months ago, Comrade Fidel was very excited about a special plan begun on the northern coast of Havana Province. In its first stage, this plan includes the Jibacoa and Playa Amarilla areas and the expansion of Puerto Escondido. Thousands of rustic cabins and a few Olympic-size pools will be built at these places. This tourist project will have an 11,000-person capacity this year and grow in the future according to the needs. Fidel suggested that we link the capital's work centers with the various areas of this plan so that the workers can enjoy these facilities at moderate prices. This may mean that the workers in the capital will receive in 1 year what the CTC-INTUR plan offers to workers of the entire country in 5 years.

If this initiative is extended to a greater or lesser extent to the other provinces, it may replace the current CTC-INTUR plan in a much better way. If we add to this the effort aimed at further incorporating the workers of all provinces into the people's camping plans, the possibilities for recreation will be incomparably greater. At present, 48 percent of those participating in camping activities are workers. This means that we are not going to worry about whether workers go to Varadero and other beaches. We might reach an agreement with INTUR comrades to reserve part of their available accomodations at the beaches for workers at official prices. In addition, the CTC could promise to this congress to send the country's outstanding workers to those beaches with all expenses paid. [applause]

Four years ago, when Cuban workers were joyfully celebrating 1 May, Comrade Fidel announced the creation of the Territorial Militia Troops [MTT]. The people received the news with extraordinary enthusiasm. In 41,000 meetings convoked by the unions, more than 2 million workers expressed their intention to join this new force, which complements the country's defensive system to wage the people's war, voluntarily contribute to cover its cost, and devote part of their free time to military training. Some 500,000 women and men of our nation, duly organized and prepared, are members of the MTT ranks. Another 500,000 Cubans, as Fidel said on 26 July 1983, are being organized and prepared. It is of particular importance to note that this figure includes a large number of our trained women. [applause]

The generous contributions of the people to help defray the expenses of the MTT have amounted to more than 64 million pesos in the last 3 years. Of this amount, nearly 50 million came from the trade union movement. Last year, the trade unions set a goal of contributing 17,780,000 pesos to the MTT. This figure was surpassed and over 20 million pesos were collected. [applause]

Bastion-83, the largest strategic exercise ever carried out in our country, was an outstanding success in which valuable experience was gained in defense-related activities by all the political and mass organizations, state agencies, and other institutions in the country.

Our congress, adopting the unanimous sentiment expressed by the workers in the discussion of the draft report, should speak out in favor of the workers' continued massive joining of regular FAR units, the MTT, and the Civil Defense. It should continue to support the military training of the workers, continue the efforts begun to encourage the updating of the military rolls, redouble efforts to contribute to fortification and camouflage efforts, and offer the valuable experiences accumulated by the trade unions to help improve living conditions and recreational facilities of the troops.

We can state before this 15th Congress that today the links are stronger than ever between the workers and their trade union organization and our dear, glorious, and invincible Revolutionary Armed Forces, whose ability and military power are continually strengthening. [applause]

The close ties that unite the Cuban workers with their Revolutionary Armed Forces -- the uniformed people to which Camilo [Cienfuegos] referred -- contrast radically with the situation that predominates in many Latin American countries, including El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Chile, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Haiti, where the army and other repressive agencies in the service of the local exploiters and Yankee imperialism, advised by the CIA and the Pentagon, indiscriminately suppress and massacre workers and people.

Many examples could prove this statement. Horrifying and indignant are the reports coming from Argentina, which reveal the infamous crimes committed against the disappeared persons by the military regimes that country has suffered under. As has been irrefutably proven, the military governments were advised by the United States, particularly by a government such as Reagan's who cynically proclaims respect for human rights.

Similarly, this congress should demand that the trade union movement continue supporting the Physical Protection Committees in the workplaces, particularly the organization and strengthening of the workers guard. Every workplace should be an impregnable trench against which any enemy action would crash to pieces.

Our trade unions will fight tirelessly so that each worker knows what he has to do in a wartime situation. As Fidel has said, if the time comes to defend our land and our lives, together with the heroic fighters of our glorious Revolutionary Armed Forces, men and women, old people and youths, will take up weapons to give the aggressors a lesson that they will never forget and an example that will move the world and shake the empire. [applause, cheering]

The fundamental ideological work of the trade union movement has been directed at creating an adequate climate for the solution of specific problems of production, services, saving, discipline, efficiency, overcoming difficulties, and advancing society.

The unions have promoted the study of the universal principles of Marxism-Leninism and the thorough examination of certain theoretical topics linked to their work, concentrating on those aspects dealing with propaganda, the better use of the means of mass dissemination, and the development of other initiatives aimed at strengthening their influence in the ideological sphere.

We have promoted various agitation and propaganda drives and plans, many with unquestionable success, such as the drive for the economic education of the workers. From the 14th Congress up to now, 38 political study circles have been held. Nearly 2 million workers have participated on an average in 1982 and 1983.

We must continue to struggle to raise the quality of the study circles, and particularly the organization, stability, and training of their 60,000 advisers. It should be noted that during recent years, in response to the self-critical analysis conducted in mid-1981, this activity has begun to have a greater impact. The number of work centers that have prepared their historical records and martyrs' biographies is growing.

Our organization has actively participated in ideological drives called for by the party. The incorporation of the unions into the history teams and the 1 January contest were not satisfactory during 1980 and 1981, and we were criticized because of it. Sometimes we did not even understand that criticism, but subsequent events demonstrated that it was just. This is confirmed by the results of 1982 and 1983, when we overfulfilled the commitments we made.

Within our material limitations, we have made great efforts to broaden and improve our written propaganda, even though it is still insufficient. Our official newspaper TRABAJADORES, overcoming numerous obstacles, has been gradually improving, and is being asked for with great interest by our union affiliates. We, of course, hope it will continue to advance.

All the mass media in the country, and particularly the daily GRANMA, the provincial newspapers and radio stations, and the national radio and television stations, have offered efficient cooperation for the fulfillment of our tasks. We still do not know how to properly utilize the great understanding that prevails among the leaders of radio, television, and the press for the work of the CTC and the unions.

The 1 May celebrations have been impressive. Large rallies have been held in the municipalities and marches staged and ceremonies held in the capitals of provinces on that day. In the past few years, large marches have been staged on the occasion of main events. Our combative people have marched at the Jose Marti Plaza of the Revolution in front of the platform where Fidel, Raul, and the main leaders of the party, government, and the labor movement have headed celebrations.

Our union work will increase and become consolidated to the degree that all the workers clearly understand the tasks that they must carry out at any given moment. The labor movement must increase its efforts to help educate the new generations on the principles of social coexistence and teach them not only habits of work and discipline, but the class awareness needed in their formation as future workers and leaders of the new society we are building. A better link by parent workers with the tasks inherent in the education and overall formation of youths and children is very important.

With renewed energy, we must continue to develop in workers the heroism of union members, the socialist patriotism, and the proletarian internationalism which have inspired their historic participation in these past 25 years of struggle and revolutionary creation. We must continue to encourage their unselfishness, human solidarity, and ability to work and make sacrifices for others. We must continue to firmly fight the remnants of small bourgeois attitudes which still prevail and are evident, among other aspects, in egoism, vanity, the desire for privileges, cronyism, the tolerance for mistakes, the lack of sensibility for the problems of workers, and the contempt for their unions. [applause]

The anti-Cuban campaign which has characterized the policy of the last seven U.S. administrations has been expanded now and is acquiring a much more aggressive and provocative tone. They are trying to deceive our people and poison them with their alienating ideas. They are trying to destabilize and subvert the revolution. Our enemies are wrong again. Their ideas will not penetrate us. Their lies will not confuse us. Their riches will not dazzle us. Their threats will not intimidate us. [applause]

The unions' political and ideological work will be more militant, conscientious, profound, persevering, and systematic. We accept the challenge. The Cuban workers and the people will reject and crush all the maneuvers of their enemies in the realm of ideas. They will use the impenetrable and indestructible shield of the most vigorous repudiation -- a specific and enlightening testimony of their unity, cohesion, firmness, and loyalty to principles -- as an insurmountable wall. [applause]

The most important international activity carried out by Cuban unions at this stage was the preparation of the First World Trade Unions Congress held in Havana in 1982. Our commander in chief, Comrade Fidel, opened the congress. He gave a profound, enlightening speech which had extraordinary influence on the course of the debates and especially on the final resolutions. This event was the most representative forum in WFTU history. It represented, because of its classist and anti-imperialist content, an important contribution to the struggle of workers at the international level and a positive support for the achievement of their most vital and heartfelt aspirations.

Peace and development have become the main banners of the struggle of the workers of the world. To Cuban union members, these objectives are not contradictory. On the contrary, they complement one another. We are firmly convinced that there can be no peace without development nor development without a climate of peace. The purpose of attaining these two objectives is indissolubly linked to the fight being carried out by the peoples, who are economically and politically subjugated, to shake off the yoke of imperialist, colonialist, and neocolonialist exploitation to obtain liberty, true democracy, and social progress.

The CTC and the unions, during these years, have voiced, constantly and increasingly, their identification with and support for these just aspirations of the workers and peoples through the testimony of their most firm and militant solidarity. These efforts have mainly included our most vigorous rejection of the adventurous decision of the Yankee government and some of its NATO allies to deploy 572 nuclear missiles in Europe, aimed at Lenin's homeland and at other countries of the socialist community.

This congress must express its unrestricted support for the policy of peace and detente being promoted by the Government and Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and Comrade Andropov, until recently the CPSU secretary general, and the just measures which are being inevitably adopted as a response to the insane attempt to upset the nuclear balance. [applause]

Our people felt profound grief over Andropov's death. For this reason, the first action of this congress was to observe a minute of silence in his memory.

We have fought to counteract the maneuvers of U.S. imperialism to destabilize the Sandinist revolution and prevent the victory of the people's forces in El Salvador. In the face of a threat of a direct U.S. military intervention in Central America and the Caribbean, the CTC and the unions have promoted joint actions in the area, such as the Labor Conference of Solidarity with Central America held in Panama in late 1983.

We have voiced our solidarity with the workers who are fighting against imperialism, neocolonialism, fascism, racism, Zionism, and apartheid in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

We reject the criminal bombings in Lebanon and the military hostility against Syria. We join in the countless expressions of solidarity with the just cause of the Palestinian people.

We state our staunch support for the struggle promoted by the workers and the unions in capitalist industrialized countries in the face of the offensive of imperialist transnationals.

From the 14th Congress to date, we have continued to strengthen the fraternal relations of brotherhood and cooperation which unite us to the unions of socialist countries, and very especially to the USSR's All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions. [applause]

We have strengthened our ties with the WFTU and the international trade unions. The support for CEPUSTAL [Permanent Congress for the Labor Unity of Latin American and Caribbean Workers] has been an important part of our activity in an effort to strengthen its role and authority in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Our international behavior is governed by a broad sense of unity. We believe that the workers and their labor unions can have political, philoscphical, or religious differences and by discussing these differences within a framework of mutual respect, we can fight together for our common economic, political, and social requirements.

There is more that unites workers of the world than there is that divides them. The CTC has, together with the labor unions of the socialist countries and many other unions which have progressive positions, carried out a constant struggle at the ILO, in an effort to eradicate discriminatory practices that reactionary forces are trying to implement in this important organization, bent on preventing the ILO from becoming truly democratic and universal.

In the past 5 years, the CTC and the unions participated in 250 events abroad. Cuba was the site of two important international labor conferences and meetings and received hundreds of union members from every continent.

In these years of hard work for the well-being and happiness of our people, everytime our country faced a difficulty or a danger, we have felt the invaluable, solidaristic support of the world's workers and unions. These signs of confidence and friendship are deeply appreciated. They have been an incentive to continue, with renewed energy, the great task of the socialist revolution, and have encouraged us to continue strengthening the beautiful principles of proletarian internationalism.

Internationalism is the most noble, the most generous, and the loftiest principle sown by the revolution and Fidel in the conscience of our working class and our people. Internationalism is a sign of our own strength. A people willinging to give everything for others will never be defeated. [applause]

During this congress, we wish to express, with profound admiration, our recognition of and send our greeting to the thousands of compatriots who, as workers, combatants, and proud examples to our people, are waving, in more than 30 countries of the world, the solidaristic banner of the Cuban revolution. [applause]

In the report distributed to the delegates, we gave a detailed account of the results of our organizational work. The closest unity, collective work, criticism, and self-criticism have guided our organization. In December 1979, the CTC National Committee did a self-criticism of its own methods and style of work. As a result of this, it adopted a series of measures to give better, more constant attention to the rank and file. Each professional cadre of the labor movement, without exception, established a work program which implied direct participation in a specific number of labor organizations. This direct and systematic tie with the rank and file has been improving. The presence of our cadres in the enterprises, stores, and units is becoming increasingly evident, and is based on the desire to learn about problems and help in their solution.

In the past 4 years, each of our professional cadres has visited, on an average, 133 work centers per year and has participated in the meetings of union committees, in assemblies, and in other activities. This type of work strengthens the authority of the labor movement and is evident in the fulfillment of duties and in the formation and training of cadres.

This method and style must be constantly maintained and enriched. It is a valuable experience. It is also the unchanging characteristic of a labor practice sustained on the principle of spending less time with paperwork in offices and more time at factories with workers. [applause]

Progress has been made in the implementation of the policy of selection, distribution, and promotion of the cadres. The stability of this policy is increasing. There is more stringency in the mechanisms established for promotion and the analysis in each periodic evaluation is more profound. Each of these evaluations should have a closer connection with the specific results of the cadres' work.

The number of labor leaders with more than 10 years of experience increased from 28 percent in 1978 to 47 percent in 1983. Of course, we are now older. The average age of 37 in 1978 has now risen to 40.

We now have the extraordinary strength of more than 280,000 rank and file leaders and more than 300,000 union activists who, with their selfless, persistent, and fruitful work, are fighting tirelessly to fulfill our tasks. We congratulate all of them, particularly the 1,000 comrades who are voluntarily giving classes at basic union schools [escuelas sindicales elementales]. [applause]

We already have 328 basic union schools, 6 provincial schools, and the Lazaro Pena National School. It is a system that has graduated more than 81,000 cadres, at various levels, in these past 5 years. We must add that 842 labor leaders from more than 30 countries graduated from this school over the same period. Also during this period, 78 percent of the cadres who were at the intermediate and high levels have taken political courses.

In 1978, 49 percent of the professional leaders of the CTC and the unions had a tenth grade or higher education. At present, this figure is 82 percent. More than one third of our labor leaders in the province or the nation are university graduates or are attending the university.

We have been working tirelessly to speed up the leadership mechanisms, simplify our information system, remove the cadres from superfluous tasks, and perfect our structure. We must continue to work on this. Some studies will be presented in this regard to one of the committees of this congress. We have difficulties with the structure of certain unions in extraterritorial enterprises [empresas extraterritoriales]. A solution must be found for this problem.

Our rank and file organizations meet on a regular basis. But the important thing that must draw our attention is how these meetings are held, what they are discussing, and what the quality is. We view with concern the fact that there are labor leaders, fortunately only a few, who see in these meetings one more task and one more goal, and there are even some who see them as a burden. They do not realize that they are an irreplaceable instrument to guarantee the full life of our rank and file and to achieve more ambitious objectives.

All our rank and file organizations must have their own initiatives and actions. They must have a specific plan, style, and method of work. They must be aware that they are leadership organizations in which all the leaders must meet regularly to discuss and define the problems which interest the workers collectively. They must establish guidelines for, distribute, and check on the work being performed and its results. These meetings must truly constitute schools of ideas and leadership awareness.

We ended 1983 with 99.2 percent of the country's workers affiliated with unions. Cuba now has one of the highest labor affiliation levels in the world. [applause]

From the 14th Congress to date, we have been able to maintain a balance between our income and our expenses. This is a result of keeping expenses to a minimum and increasing the collection of union dues.

This congress will discuss a draft resolution on the CTC financial policy. A new scale is being proposed for the collection of union dues in accordance with the new salary system that is in effect.

On this occasion, it is proper to stress that in Cuba, union affiliation and the payment of dues is completely voluntary. In fact, the unions reject any initiative aimed at collecting union dues through payroll deductions because they feel that the payment of dues must be voluntary and conscientious gesture.

What is the meaning of the high levels of affiliation and union dues paid we are referring to? They are a sign of the appreciation the workers have for their unions and the attachment of labor organizations to their members. This unquestionably means that the workers feel the unions are theirs. For this reason, they support them economically, follow union plans, and make them a reality.

In May 1983, in a political speech before a counterrevolutionary crowd in Miami, Mr Reagan mentioned among other nonsense and lies a so-called strong independent labor movement existing in Cuba before 1959. According to him, this movement was destroyed by a regime which shouts slogans about its concern for workers. A few weeks ago, in another hypocritical and anti-Cuban speech, Mr Reagan discussed this topic again. Of course, when Mr Reagan talked about the labor movement existing in Cuba in ancient capitalist times he was not referring to that formed by our dear CTC, which recently had its 45th anniversary. [applause] He was not referring to unions headed by Jesus Menendez, Aracelo Iglesias, Jose Maria Perez, Lazaro Pena, and many other labor, communist, and progressive leaders who, because of their loyalty to and support of the just cause of the workers, were savagely killed, repressed, and persecuted by the corrupt and repressive regimes adopted by Yankee imperialism.

It is easy to surmise that to Reagan, this alleged independent labor movement was made up of representatives from the yellow trade unions [amarillaje sindical] who attacked union offices at gunpoint, placed themselves at the service of the Batista tyranny only a few hours after his coup, and imposed the shameful mandatory union dues. They turned their backs on the masses, stole retirement funds, became rich through endless fraudulent deals, and were repudiated by the workers. This alleged independent labor movement will never again exist in our country.

With the victorious January 1959, the conditions emerged to definitely consolidate a classist labor movement firmly committed to the cause of revolution and socialism. It is a trade union movement that is proud of its best traditions and that has nothing to do with the U.S. President's hope for a return to the past.

It is a labor movement that has all the rights and possibilities. It is a labor movement which helps workers participate, truly and effectively, in the country's life as an unequivocal expression of a true democracy. This congress is precisely a reaffirmation of this complete truth. [applause]

Here, together with the workers, as usual, is Fidel, who is attending the sessions of this congress. [applause, crowd shouts: "Fidel! Fidel!"] Fidel is here to share our concerns and hopes. Fidel, Raul, and other leaders of the revolution are here to participate together with the workers' representatives, in the common effort to boost the plans for production and service, increase productivity and conservation, improve labor discipline and safety protection at work, and increase the people's educational and cultural level, as well as improving their well-being.

In sum, we are here to come to the best agreements in favor of society and not to enrich any boss or imperialist monopoly. Here in our free and sovereign land we are all witnesses without exception of the respect and profound affection that workers feel for Fidel and the members of the Politburo and the Central Committee, and the ministers of our government. [applause, an unidentified delegate shouts: "Viva the Communist Party of Cuba!" Crowd responds: "Viva!"]

Let Mr Reagan do the same. Let him try to participate, together with the representatives of U.S. workers, in an event such as this and we will see if he can experience the happy feeling of knowing that the workers love and admire him. That is simply impossible. Mr Reagan may pose for television cameras, recalling his times as a mediocre movie star, but he will not ever be able to conquer the hearts of the workers. [applause, crowd shouts: "Fidel! Fidel!"]

Dear comrade delegates and guests: We have reached the end of this report. We have reviewed what we have done and made suggestions for the many tasks ahead. We have referred to the result of meetings held to discuss the draft report of this congress, and listened to proposals that were stressed and repeated. We have not ignored the proposals of a very small number of workers because it is our duty to hear and evaluate everyone's opinions. We agreed with many of these proposals although there were others which we do not recommend for inclusion in the accords of this congress. We explained our reasons for not recommending them. Of course, if there are delegates here who do not agree with these reasons, they not only have the right but the duty to say so. It is a characteristic of our union work to listen attentively to workers, to promote the analysis of issues, and to have them speak up about them. In this free play of ideas, we want to gather everything that is useful.

To those who express ideas which may be wrong, the union offers with proper respect, prompt explanations to enlighten and guide them closer to more constructive positions. This is the work of the union -- assembly, discussion, criticism, self-criticism, and head work. This is the type of organization we love. This is the type of organization to which we bravely and vigorously devote ourselves. To this type of organization we dedicate our efforts, hopes and aspirations as creators and communists. [applause]

We are still facing limitations and material difficulties, but there is no comparison possible between our situation and that of our class brothers in the capitalist world, a world where calamities, oppression, humiliation, discrimination, inequality, and injustice prevail.

It is not only a matter of guaranteeing jobs, security, education, and health care for all. It is not only a matter of improving our standard of living, moderately but constantly and, of course, in line with the realities of today's world. It is basically a matter of this freedom, this profound dignification of the man who works, this solidarity prevailing among our people and evident in our internationalist ideals, and this ability to discuss and solve, realistically and conscientiously, all the problems of vital interest to us.

We are the sole owners of our destiny. The revolution is the deed that gives sense to our lives. There is no effort or sacrifice too great to be worth making to magnify our revolution and defend it more with each passing day. The more and better we work, the stronger we will be militarily and the more beautiful the revolution we defend will be. We will create more wealth every day, but we will also create more communist awareness. We will not only work for our bread but will know how to share it with our brothers.

On this day our heartfelt recognition goes to all our workers. With their hard work, effort, and determination, they have made possible the victories which inspire and give life to this congress.

Our deepest gratitude goes to our glorious Communist Party of Cuba, [applause] its Central Committee, its Politburo, its Secretariat, its provincial and municipal committees, its groups, and all its members. With the 8th Plenum Resolution, they have given us a banner and an instrument of struggle which we will firmly grasp in our working hands.

Thank you, comrades of the Union of Young Communists, for the invaluable support you are giving us and our great working relationship.

Thank you, dear comrades of the Federation of Cuban Women, tireless standard-bearers in the struggle for the full equality of women. [applause]

Thank you, comrades of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, vigilant and combative people who will not lower their guard at any time. [applause]

Thank you, brothers of the National Association of Small Farmers who are carrying out, with impressive results, the task of reaching higher levels of socialist production and are consolidating our unshakeable worker-peasant alliance. [applause]

Thank you, comrades of the student organizations. Thank you, dear Pioneers who are helping us form the worthy replacement of our working people, shining hope of our future. [applause]

Thank you, heroic combatants of the FAR and the Ministry of Interior, proud sentinels of our homeland and invincible shields of its conquests, and legitimate pride of our people. [applause]

Thank you, dear Comrade Raul [applause], for your guidance, help, and your example of humility, selflessness, and endless love for the working class, as well as your dedication to the revolutionary cause. [applause]

Thank you, dear Comrade Fidel. [applause] Thank you, Fidel, for your example, lessons, communist teachings, constant diligent attitude toward our CTC and the unions, concern for the workers' well-being, and for leading us to the heights of our freedom and showing us the upward path for this trade union movement that is strong, united, powerful, and democratic, and which begins its 15th congress today. [applause; crowd shouts: "Viva Fidel!"]

Recently, almost all CTC cadres in the provinces were promoted to members of the corresponding executive bureaus of the party. Leaders of many unions were promoted to members of the party's provincial committees. Something similar happened in the municipalities. We can proudly point out that many labor leaders are delegates to local organs of the People's Government, or deputies to the National Assembly, and that our CTC is represented and actively participating at the highest levels of the party, state, and government.

In Cuba, no decision that affects workers is made unless the opinion of their trade union organizations is heard first. In fact, we can say that in our country, no decision that concerns workers is made without the approval of their union representatives. The delegates to this congress and all our working people know this incomparable truth. [applause] This shows, dear comrades, the meaning of the labor movement in our homeland. We are aware of this. We know the obligation it entails.

A few years ago when our party held its second congress, the CTC and the unions received an unforgettable vote of recognition and confidence when a large number of its leaders were elected to the Central Committee. On a day like today, we must say that on that occasion all those comrades reaffirmed their commitment to be better, more humble revolutionaries. They vowed to get closer to our marvelous people. We must say that on that unforgettable occasion those comrades were a little sad because they would have wanted Lazaro to share the surprise and the emotion of that moment. [applause] Lazaro is not here with us but his work is here. His disciples are here. His dreams, which the revolution made reality, are here. [applause] The labor movement Lazaro wanted and to which he devoted the last moment of his life is here. [applause]

Fidel, your workers, your unions, and your CTC will share all the battles, and, as always, will march with you to new victories. [applause]

Commander in Chief: [crowd responds: "At your orders!"]
Viva the Communist Party of Cuba! [crowd responds: "Viva!"]
Viva the 15th Congress! [crowd responds: "Viva!"]
Viva Fidel! [crowd responds: "Viva!"]
Fatherland or death! [crowd responds: "We shall win!"] [applause]

Castro Presides at 2d Session

FL221612 Havana Television Service in Spanish 1205 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro has presided over the second session of the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [CTC], which is being held in the Lazaro Pena Theater in Havana. The second session was characterized by a deeper analysis of the subjects that affect our economy. Enthusiasm, widespread participation, and a critical spirit permeated the plenary session of the congress, which was dedicated to the discussion of the central report read by Roberto Veiga, alternate member of the Politburo and secretary general of the CTC, on the first day.

Lage Transmits UJC Greetings

FL221618 Havana Television Service in Spanish 1234 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Excerpt] Comrade Carlos Lage, first secretary of the Union of Young Communists [UJC], has transmitted emotive greetings from the UJC to the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [CTC] during the second day of meetings of the great trade union event, being held in the Lazaro Pena Theater of the national CTC.

Fidel, Raul Present at 3d Session

FL221935 Havana Television Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] This morning the work sessions of the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [CTC] were renewed in the Lazaro Pena Theater in Havana, in the presence of Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, first secretary of the party Central Committee and president of the Councils and State and Ministers. Army General Raul Castro, second secretary of the Central Committee and vice president of the Councils of State and Ministers, also participated in the morning session.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY MEETING HELD

FL221544 Havana Television Service in Spanish 1234 GMT 22 Feb 84

[Text] An international trade union meeting of solidarity with Central America and the Caribbean has been held at the Palace of Conventions with the participation of union delegations invited to the 15th Congress of the Central Organization of Cuban Trade Unions [CTC]. Jesus Escandel Romero, member of the Executive Secretariat of the CTC, gave the opening speech at the meeting, held within the framework of the 20th anniversary of the founding of the CEPUSTAL [Permanent Congress for the Labor Unity of Latin American and Caribbean Workers].

CASTRO SENDS ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS TO CPV

BK191034 Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 16 Feb 84

[Message of greetings from Fidel Castro Ruz, first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and president of the Councils of State and Ministers, to Le Duan, general secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam -- date of message not given]

[Text] The immortal example set by Vietnam constitutes a strong inspiration for all those who are struggling against the tense liberation, as well as those who are struggling against the tense international atmosphere caused by the current U.S. Administration and other reactionary forces, and for the firm defense of the cause of peace, justice, and social progress.

On the occasion of this meaningful anniversary, we would like to reaffirm our party's firm solidarity and unreserved support for the building and defense of your socialist homeland and for the CPV's clear-sighted policy aimed at achieving an atmosphere of peace and cooperation with all countries in the region through dialogue.

COMMENTARY CITES CASTRO NEWSWEEK INTERVIEW

PA221319 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Station commentary read by Jose Leandro Rodriguez]

[Text] Newswoman Patricia Cecil, who recently interviewed Fidel Castro for the U.S. magazine NEWSWEEK, asked Fidel: Why do you feel it necessary to send teachers, doctors, technicians, and advisers to other developing countries, when you can use them here in your own country? Why do the people have to make this sacrifice? There will come a day when your people will say: No more, Fidel; please let us stay in our country.

Fidel Castro answered: That day will not come, because there is among our people a growing feeling of solidarity as well as an internationalist spirit. It is a great honor for the Cuban people to fulfill this internationalist duty.

Do you find this strange? Castro asked the NEWSWEEK reporter. If you observe what happens in industrialized countries and in capitalist societies, including those of the Third World, you will see that individualistic and selfish interests prevail. It was the same in Cuba before the revolution. We could not send anyone abroad to assist other developing countries. Now we have thousands who are willing to go to Yemen, Nicaragua, Vietnam, or Angola.

The Cuban leader explained that when Nicaragua needed 2,000 teachers and we asked for volunteers, 29,000 Cubans volunteered. When a Cuban teacher was murdered in Nicaragua, 100,000 Cuban teachers were willing to replace that teacher. This means, he added, that we have in Cuba more persons with a spirit of self-sacrifice willing to go to Third World countries than all the missionaries of all the churches of the world and all the members of the Peace Corps combined. We have a large number of youths willing to carry out any mission assigned to them, because they understand the ethical values of the revolution, Castro said.

In another part of the interview granted to Patricia Cecil, Fidel Castro talked about Cuba's relations with the USSR. He explained that anyone who has observed the history of our revolution and understands its origins will realize that ours is a genuine revolution, self-created. We did not even have relations with the USSR when our revolution was achieved. Therefore, Castro said, the interpretation we gave to the doctrine of our revolution was our own.

Fortunately, he added, the USSR was there. What would have happened if the USSR had not been there? What would have become of Cuba when the sugar quota was suspended? The people would have starved. What would have happened when the oil supply was suspended? What would have happened when we could not obtain spare parts for any U.S. equipment? What would have happened when the United States set up the blockade? We would not have survived if we had not found a market for our sugar, if we had not received oil and the arms we needed for our defense against an invasion like the Bay of Pigs and other attacks and acts of sabotage. We were privileged, Castro said, to find a friend to help us face all those problems.

Never in 25 years have the Soviets tried to interfere in our affairs, politics, or activities, Castro declared. They have been extremely polite to us, even when we criticized some of their concepts. But not even then did the Soviets try to exact economic reprisals. They have always been very respectful toward us. I am not worried about what Reagan says, Castro told Patricia Cecil. He is a real liar, he added. We are not going to become enemies of the USSR and sacrifice our excellent relations with them just to prove that we are not their puppet.

TRANSPORT DELEGATION ARRIVES IN CHINA FOR TALKS

PA221940 Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Feb 84

[Text] A Cuban Transportation Ministry delegation arrived on Tuesday in Beijing to begin official talks with Chinese authorities on maritime transportation cooperation. Bilateral relations regarding maritime and port transportation, the annual commercial trade volume, and recent technological changes are the most important subjects of the negotiations. The Cuban delegation is led by Roberto Camacho, fleet exploitation and port director, who is being accompanied by representatives of the Cuban Foreign Trade Ministry and (?ship) and navigation enterprises.

GRENADA

POLITICIAN SAYS PEOPLE 'UNSURE' ABOUT PARTIES

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[By Trevor Yearwood]

[Text] Bridgetown, Barbados, Feb 16 (CANA) -- Three months after the caretaker government in St George's announced plans for general elections, several Grenadians are still unsure about which political group to back "because they don't know which politician to trust," one party leader, Francis Alexis, said here today. The problem had been created by a sudden proliferation of parties, said Dr Alexis, who heads the relatively new Grenada Democratic Movement (GDM). Grenada had been virtually a one-party state since 1979, when the leftist New Jewel Movement (NJM) took power in a coup. The NJM was deposed by the Army last October, but the junta was quickly unseated by a U.S.-led invasion.

"There is a tendency on the part of a good many Grenadians to say that they don't know which politician to trust," Dr Alexis told a news conference. "Secondly, some Grenadians say they don't want elections at this time." He added: "What they really are saying is that they are seeing so many parties in the country coming out of the background of last October they are unsure as to just which of these parties to vote for and in that state of unsureness they should not want elections now." About six parties are expected to contest the election, a date for which has not yet been set, but which the interim government said would be held in the latter half of this year. These include the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP) of former Prime Minister Eric Gairy, the Grenada National Party (GNP) of 65-year-old former Chief Minister Herbert Blaize, and the National Democratic Party (NDP), reported to be led by a former top civil servant, George Brizan. Dr Alexis' party has been having discussions with Blaize's group and the NDP on a possible merger. The talks started last December and one of the holdups is said to be Blaize's reluctance to have the new group called anything but the GNP. One of the recommendations was that the new group would not be named after any of the three parties. Dr Alexis also admitted that the parties had been committed to the merger "in varying degrees," but did not go into details. The part-time law lecturer at the University of the West Indies (UWI) Barbados campus said the three parties, which share the same social, political, and economic outlook, did not anticipate a problem over the choice of a leader.

Blaize's party comprises mainly professionals. Blaize is a lawyer. Dr Alexis said his party was one of intellectuals, not communist, and not conservative. The third party is reported to be made up largely of professionals and intellectuals. Dr Alexis said he expected the three to iron out their problems by month-end.

During the wide-ranging news conference, Dr Alexis also spoke about security in Grenada. He said he backed the interim government's decision to scrap the Army, saying "far more positive kinds of employment" were available. He also said the U.S. and Caribbean security personnel helping to maintain peace in Grenada should stay "until the people of Grenada say they should go." Grenadians needed to go about their business with confidence and poise, "and you cannot do that if you remove the foreign forces right now," he remarked.